

# TOC H JOURNAL

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## "UNCLE HARRY"

THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE of Toc H meets in the first week of each month, and on the first Wednesday of this year, January 3, Harry Ellison was in his place at the table, representing the affairs of Toc H Overseas as its Chief Overseas Commissioner. At the end of a long meeting he walked from Headquarters with three of his fellow-members to Victoria Station, said good-night to them and got into the Underground to go home. He failed to change trains at Charing Cross: at Bow Road the truth was discovered and his dead body was carried out of the train. Thus, returning straight from his post of duty at the heart of Toc H, he fell peacefully asleep. Not only at the centre of Toc H but in its furthest outposts throughout the world, men, marking his empty place, remember him with sincere affection and proud thanksgiving.

Henry Blomfield Ellison was 65 years old. With his charming smile, his cheerful courtesy and his beautiful voice he was a notable figure of a man in any assembly. The sterling fact of his life and character, his faithfulness to duty at the Overseas Office and his happiness in it, is first-hand knowledge to members in every Continent. The other facts about his career before he joined the staff of Toc H may here be briefly set down. He was a schoolboy at Radley, a scholar of Pembroke College, Oxford, a student at Leeds Clergy School. His first curacy was in the Wakefield Diocese, and then, in 1901, he went out to South Africa to work with the Railway Mission, in connection with which the name of his family will always be remembered. When he left South Africa in 1912 he was the Mission's head. Four years of parish work followed as Vicar of Corsham, Wilts., where Lord Methuen was the squire. From 1915 to 1919 he was a Chaplain to the Forces and saw active service in France.

In 1921 he came to Toc H to begin that work which was henceforward to claim him, heart and soul, up to the very hour of his passing. As "Development Secretary" he occupied a basement room in the old, overcrowded Headquarters at Mark II. After a time he began especially to tackle the problem of Toc H in London, at that time consisting of three Houses and a small, scattered, wholly unorganised outside membership. In June, 1923, the first stage of his plan was fulfilled by the division of London members into four Branches, based on Marks I, II, III and VII. From this beginning the "London Federation" of Branches and Groups began to grow under his tireless hand. In January, 1925, Rex Calkin joined the staff as his assistant, with the title of "London Jobmaster." The months that followed were full of busy and happy partnership, and when Rex took over from him as London Secretary at the end of the year the foundations were already well and truly laid for what is to-day four London Areas, containing some 140 units. London members of Toc H have, therefore, special reason to remember Harry Ellison with pride and gratitude, for half of his years of service in Toc H were mainly devoted to the brave building of their great family. The second half, the years 1926-1933, were to take Harry Ellison into a wider field and to make his name a household word to members in all parts of the world. Tubby and Pat Leonard had traversed four Continents in their Toc H "World Tour" during 1925: they had not set foot in one—Africa.

And so, on December 30 of that year, Harry Ellison set out for the land which he already knew and loved well. Mrs. Ellison, as an emissary of the League of Women Helpers, went with him and shared the fortunes of an exceedingly arduous year. At the beginning of it Toc H was represented in South Africa by one small Group only, but when Harry and Mrs. Ellison returned, in mid-November, 1926, after some 26,000 miles of travelling, they left behind a Branch and 35 Groups of Toc H and the beginnings of L.W.H. in many places. Harry Ellison ended his final JOURNAL dispatch about the tour with these words: "It was a big compensation to be greeted by Dutch members already in Toc H (and in steadily increasing numbers) as *Oom Hendrik*! So I sign myself in its English equivalent as, yours always in Toc H, *Uncle Harry*." From that day forward, in deep affection and regard, he was simply "Uncle Harry" to all of us.

The South African tour had been very strenuous and had taken toll of Uncle Harry's bodily strength, but not of his spirit. He was not to rest long at home. In May, 1927, he sailed for Canada, where Toc H, founded in 1922, had made slow progress. Once more it was a record of long journeys and incessant work, from which he did not reach home again until Christmas Eve.

This time his rest was to be even shorter. In February, 1928, he and Mrs. Ellison again set out for South Africa to confirm the work already begun and to extend it. When they returned, in January, 1929, it was to report the existence in South Africa of 65 units of Toc H and 20 of L.W.H.

During their absence an event at home determined what Uncle Harry's job, the crown of his work in Toc H, henceforward was to be. In March "Ludo" (Sir Ludovic Porter) died, leaving behind him the germ of an "Overseas Office" of Toc H, created by his own joyful work as the first "Hon Commissioner for India." It was unthinkable that the service Ludo had begun to render to young men going out East should be discontinued. The idea of this new avenue for Toc H activity needed rather to be extended also to other parts of the Empire and beyond. Uncle Harry, therefore, was appointed Chief Overseas Commissioner, working (as he did from first to last in Toc H) in an honorary capacity. He set up an office at the newly-acquired 'Forty-Two,' Trinity Square, close to All Hallows Church, and by the following summer had collected round him a team of senior men of experience to act as Hon. Commissioners for Africa, India, Ceylon, Burma, China and the Argentine. The constitution of this team has varied since then, but their work has remained the same—to advise men going out, to ensure their welcome on arrival overseas and to offer all the support which an older man's experience can give a younger. The Overseas Office also rapidly became the *rendezvous* of all members returning from the four quarters of the world. And the sufficient secret of the eagerness with which they have 'reported' there, day in day out, these last three years, has been the certainty of Uncle Harry's welcome, a grasp of his hand, an hour's talk with him, a smiling 'God-speed' as they went away. He was their man. They loved him.

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The last tributes of his fellow-members gave proof, if any were needed, of the respect and deep affection with which they regarded him. His body was laid in the Coeur de Lion Chapel of All Hallows on Friday, January 5, before the altar and the steady, undying flame of the Prince's Lamp. The light of the four great candles round the Forster Memorial fell upon the deep red roses which lay upon the coffin. And all night long, watch by watch, his fellow-members from London and overseas kept vigil there until the morning of Saturday brought the hour of Holy Communion, an act of truest thanksgiving. At noon the church was crowded with his friends for the first part of the Burial

Service, conducted by Pat Leonard accompanied by many Toc H Padres. The congregation sang hymns of courage and praise—Bunyan's *Pilgrim*, the 101st Psalm—"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills," "Ye watchers and ye holy ones, Alleluia!" and said farewell with the *Nunc Dimittis*. The burial took place that afternoon in the lovely country churchyard at Yateley, almost within sight of the little old house and garden which he had recently made his home and, in his hours of enforced rest, had come so much to enjoy. The thoughts and prayers of all of us go out for Mrs. Ellison, who in every vicissitude, except the hour of his passing, had stood beside him with unfailing love and help.

## I A Tribute

*The news of Harry Ellison's passing reached Tubby by cable at Malta, where (with Barkis and Geoffrey Batchelar) he was in the middle of an exceedingly busy ten days' programme of work. That night he wrote what follows.*

All the old gang of us, not now too many, have known for a year past, since his grave illness, that Uncle Harry had not long to wait. He knew it himself, dear man, but all his cricket and his Christian strength came out in him when he came back to work, no longer as an untireable ally, but in the ranks of what a saintly disabled member at Preston Hall has, with a sufferer's humour, called "Crock H." Harry came back like this, but seldom showed it. Beloved Overseas was all his care. He shared with the great Apostle the intense pride and sympathy which lies behind the care of all the Churches . . . "Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?" Their care came on him daily; he was theirs, and they were his, not in a selfish sense. He sought co-operation from all comers, and reckoned himself least of the Apostles. Nothing was more outrageous in my view than that Uncle Harry would very seldom seal a situation by letters above his own sole signature. Even in writing to South Africa, he must needs call in all his friends and neighbours, ask them to read the letter he proposed, and add their wisdom and their name to his.

"Dogs in a manger" had no contact in him. He was a perfect father to a team, eliciting the best by a great-hearted deference to others. Yet he could make a stand, keep up his wicket, set his face like a flint against the home parochial influences absorbing overmuch of Toc H energies. Without him, the Staff Conference can never again be quite what it has been.

Observe him dealing on a chilly morning with half-a-dozen overseas home-coming men who have blown in to report arrival. His way with them was no assumption of an interest he did not truly entertain. These men were his true life; he lived for them; they were his flock and he their lifelong friend. He very seldom spoke to them directly concerning their own souls; though I have known him do so now and then. To him, man's life was properly influenced more by the things unsaid than by specific awkward exhortation. They knew he was their friend, proud of their spirit, delighted by the discharge of their duties and by their progress in Toc H ideals. None of us loved Toc H or cherished it more constantly than he.

I sat beside him in the Town Hall at Oxford last midsummer, when a glee party of the membership were singing 'Negro Spirituals,' a contribution of child-faith to the canticles of Christendom. One of the selections was, I think, "Deep River," within the lilt of which resides a pensive invitation to depart and be with Jesus, disdaining all delay. During these words, I happened to catch sight of Harry's profile, and knew in some convincing way that he would soon be called. So certain was I of the solemn truth, that the same night, despite his improved health, I wrote down this experience and the prophecy. His face had glowed with an anticipation like to the tremor of the migrant bird who knows the south is calling it to come. I have the paper still on which, that very night, I noted this strange experience. It took me back to my first sight of Harry, at a Chaplain's Conference or School at Saint Omer in 1917. There he had shadowed forth, with something of impatience in his tones, a plan for "Flying Squads" after the war, whereby a number of the Chaplains should leave the parishes and act as Missioners to men of our race dispersed. The plan was vague, the speaker rather bitter in his attitude towards the stagnant Church, as he regarded it. This bitterness increased; and in 1921, Archbishop Davidson, an uncle of Mrs. Ellison, suggested I might use, and even might help by using, Harry, who had then almost set aside his Orders. We found each other puzzling to begin with, but by degrees Harry regained the practice of his priesthood; and none of us were conscious of more grace than when he ministered the Mysteries. At New Year, 1926, he went forth to build most bravely Toc H in South Africa, which will for ever be his best memorial. In 1927 he toured in Canada, in 1928 South Africa once more, Toc H again his embassy. When 'Ludo' died—Harry loved Ludo deeply—Harry stepped in, and thus began in 1928 Toc H Overseas as a whole-time appointment, as honorary as it was onerous. Apart from fishing and a day at Lords, Harry worked on and on until his illness. Since then, he came again almost each day, and all the office glowed to have him back. No details can be here concerning the gifts from himself and his family which have hitherto supported Toc H Overseas. All this has been his private obligation of love and perseverance in self-sacrifice. Not rich himself, he has denied his needs to keep Toc H Overseas in a state of something more than high efficiency. The pitch between 47, Francis Street, Victoria, and 42, Trinity Square, Tower Hill, is more than 22 yards; but Uncle Harry not only kept his end up with enthusiasm, but backed up when the bowling warranted it. He was the *sahib* and sportsman to the finger-tips; and, left with him, all strangers soon began to purr and preen themselves at having found an audience attentive and discerning for their stories.

The Corps of Overseas Commissioners were his far more than Ludo's, but the credit was always given by him to 'Ludo' Porter. We must see to it that these senior men, his own friends for the most part, are held towards the work which he most loved.

So Uncle Harry is at one with Herbert Fleming, Ludo, and 'Cos' Sheppard, and all the cherished and enriching memories: "*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immutable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain to the Lord.*"

TUBBY.

# TO CHALLENGE HOUSING

## I.

### “The Cause is Urgent”

“For next year I give you the suggestion that you might think out ways of helping to improve the housing conditions in this country” . . . “We ought to be far less patient than we are with bad housing” . . . “Our slums are a disgrace in these modern times.”—H.R.H. THE PATRON.

“It can be done. We could end slums in England, we could secure a decent house for every family if we were ready to make the sacrifice and loved our neighbours as ourselves. If we could only see how this thing really mattered there would be an eagerness to give time, energy, service and money. . . . Men did these things in the war. They did them because the cause was urgent. It is as urgent now, but it is spread out over a longer time. We don’t get so easily round the corner as we did then. We have got sluggish and sleepy about it.”—THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

#### The Patron’s Challenge

Not for the first time has the Patron of Toc H delivered to us a direct challenge. Toc H—and the nation—has good cause to remember how two years ago he lifted the fog of helplessness from the great problem of unemployment and brought the challenge of its human effects (if not of its ultimate causes) straight home “to men’s own business and bosoms.” What he then began goes on and gathers strength. This new challenge must not be allowed to lessen our effort for the old, for indeed the two things are linked in many ways. If unemployment undermines the individual, housing conditions that make homes impossible are ruinous to family life.

The housing question, like that of unemployment, induces a sense of individual helplessness in the face of its vastness and complexity. Goodwill on this subject exists in abundance. All decent men are vaguely uneasy that so many of their fellow countrymen live under intolerable conditions; all decent men grow hot with indignation when some specially heinous case of overcrowding is thrust upon their notice. To will is present with us, but to do that which is good is not. We are driven back on Government or municipality. It is their job—let them see to it. Into this fog of hesitant goodwill, the Prince’s challenge cuts like a bracing east wind. It reminds us that behind all these instruments of government lies the responsibility of the individual citizen.

#### A Man’s Job

It must have struck many of us as remarkable that the Prince’s challenge should have followed so closely on the article “Fore,” published in the December JOURNAL. Toc H, the Central Executive there reminded us, is now full grown. If it is to justify its manhood it must face constructive work, it must think ahead, and bind its energies to the building of the future. Now, within a few weeks, we are bidden to prove our manhood. What task can be more constructive than to ensure a standard of housing that will make possible a standard of homes? What building for the future can be more important than that of homes fit to fashion for to-morrow

the finest quality of manhood and womanhood? But let us realise also that this thing will test us high. It will test our capacity for thinking fair and deep. Sloppy goodwill will get us nowhere in a matter so complex and so difficult. The first condition of usefulness is understanding. It will test our fellowship, for when it comes to methods men will differ in Toc H as outside it. If we write a fellow member down a villain because he differs from us in seeing housing salvation in the State, or in private initiative, or in a national corporation, Toc H fails at a crucial test. Its business is to create an atmosphere which will raise the whole problem to a different level of thought, leaving individual members to decide by what political or technical means they will work for the common end.\* It will test our readiness to witness steadily against an evil in the face of lethargy, vested interest, and the threat of unpopularity. Moreover, it will test the humility of our witness, not only by our readiness to take hard knocks, but by our willingness to take the lowest place in co-operation with other bodies also seeking to stimulate public opinion, such as Rotary (already in the field in many places), Councils of Social Service, Housing Societies and the like. To do something in the name of Toc H may serve the cause less well than to contribute our strength to a wider movement of public opinion. And it will test most of all perhaps our capacity for brave building. Let it be understood from the start that the building we embark on here is going to take years to accomplish. Steady effort and unfailing patience are of its essence. If we want simple jobs and quick results let us on all counts find something easier to tackle. This is a man's job.

#### Gripping the Monster

Here, then, is our monster, as elusive as a certain famous Scottish example, but real enough and foul enough. So many are its slimy coils that it is hard to see where we can get a grip. Where is the evil heart that we must seek with our blunt weapons? Is it in the slum itself, or in overcrowding, or in the toll which a better but costly home takes of health and nourishment; is it in callous vested interest, or in public lethargy, or in the deadweight that past blindness has hung about our necks? The mere fact that these questions can be asked and admit of no easy answer, is in itself an indication of the first step.

*The first duty of Toc H is to understand* the main facts of the housing question, not as technicians, but as citizens. This issue of the JOURNAL, with its effort to cast light on the problem from different angles should be some help. But it is not enough. *What can Toc H do?* (see page 75) suggests a more detailed plan. To national facts add local. The local authority has been called upon to forward its plans to the Minister of Health. If they are public, study them. If they are not, a courteous request to the Medical Officer of Health will usually put you in the way of ascertaining what is being done. If the local facts are really not known, then it may be for Toc H, in co-operation with other interested bodies, to undertake a

\* "The choice of a specific remedy for a defect is in part a political and technical matter. Its rightness will depend not only on our keen sense of the moral evil to be fought and remedied, but on our understanding of how institutions work and how far existing institutions are capable of change. Men might perfectly well agree on the evil to be remedied . . . and yet honestly take quite different views as to what are the best means to effect the desired result."—The Master of Balliol in *Christianity and Economics*, page 138.



careful and well-planned survey of housing conditions.\* That some thousands of men should be set on knowing the truth and should worry till they find it is in itself a great gain.

The second step follows naturally. *It is to help the truth to prevail.* The more people who see for themselves what slums and overcrowding mean, the stronger will be the demand of public opinion that these things should not be. It means much to cultivate the seeing eye. In a certain provincial town a wide street leads to an inspiring civic centre. Of the thousands who pass it daily few even so much as know of the teeming life existing under the foulest conditions in century-old courts on either hand. For years doctor, parson, woman magistrate and a few others have hammered at this thing. To-day the bug-ridden walls are coming down at last. But a solid nucleus of ordinary citizens who knew and cared might have saved a whole generation of children from undeserved filth and misery. Toc H should be able to co-operate with others in making local opinion white-hot. It should not fear unpopularity in the process, but let it remember always that Toc H builds not on hate but on love. Denunciation of negligence or abuse may sometimes become necessary, but by themselves they get nowhere unless behind them lies the compelling force of a love ready to feel with those who suffer and to spend itself for them.

Similarly, in dealing with local authorities, who are by law charged with vast housing responsibilities, the cause will best be **helped** by private citizens appreciating their difficulties, encouraging their best efforts **with** the backing of an enlightened public opinion, and winning their support for private endeavours to supplement their work.

Thirdly, Toc H, being what it is, must make it very clear that *not houses alone but homes*, are its concern. This may lead Toc H members and teams in different places a variety of ways. In some towns the action of a local housing society, providing or reconditioning some few houses itself, but setting a standard of home life that all can see, may be a most effective lever (*see page 70*). But the warning of a Toc H member (*see page 77*) should be taken to heart. The value of such a society depends on the width of local support it enlists, and on the soundness of its planning and finance. For Toc H to pride itself on running such a society on its own is in fact to rob the effort of half its value. Again, stressing homes not houses, units of Toc H may find their line of helpfulness in facing the problems of welding a new housing estate into a true community (*see page 70*). And almost everywhere, while the new homes are slowly coming into being, Toc H in its work for the rising generation should be steadfastly setting before it the ideal of a race trained and ready to take advantage of better living conditions as they become available. The housing problem is not to be solved in terms of bricks and mortar alone, but of men and women. Here Toc H can help mightily.

There is one last word to be said. Much depends on accurate knowledge, only to be gained by study and a resolute effort to think fairly on all sides of the

\* A housing survey is a difficult job requiring care in organisation and accuracy in execution. Anyone proposing to attempt it should first consult with one of the organisations named on page 67. A good idea of the methods and results of such a survey is given in "Housing Problems in Liverpool," obtainable from the University Settlement, Nile Street, Liverpool, price 1/1½d.

question. Much, again, depends on our readiness to share with thought and action in the burden that bad housing lays upon so many lives. But most of all depends, as the Bishop of Winchester reminds us, out of his great experience (*see below*), on our facing this thing in terms of Christian justice and Christian love. To challenge housing on that level is in accord with the true purpose for which Toc H was born. These houses, these homes, are not men's only, but God's. As we take the strain in the coming year, it may be that we shall come to read a fresh meaning into the familiar words of the *Hymn of Light*—

Master of men, who settest servants free,  
We build *Thy House* for them that follow after,  
Serving the brethren in service unto Thee.

## II.

### Slums and the Christian Conscience

*The Rt. Rev. Cyril Garbett, D.D., Bishop of Winchester, is particularly fitted to write authoritatively on the problem of Slums. As Vicar of Portsea and later as Bishop of Southwark for thirteen years, he has worked magnificently and written courageously to cure this evil. To-day he is the acknowledged expert in the House of Lords on Housing. We are proud indeed to print an article from so distinguished a contributor.*

**I**N an inquest on the death of a child through burns last Boxing Day, it came out in evidence that the child was one of nine children living with their parents in two rooms in an underground basement at Paddington: the parents and four boys slept in the bedroom, and five girls in the kitchen. An incident like this throws a sudden and lurid light on the conditions under which large numbers are living to-day. In London alone there are 100,000 persons, the population of a fair-sized provincial town, living in unhealthy basements. The last census shows that in London and in the fourteen largest provincial cities there are over half a million who live at over three persons per room. Reports of the Medical Officers of Health show that large numbers of those who occupy overcrowded rooms are living in foul and insanitary houses which ought long ago to have been closed as unfit for human habitation. It is, however, unnecessary for me to write more about the size or urgency of the problem. On all sides it is now recognized that bad housing is an evil which concerns the life of the whole nation. In towns and in rural districts alike there are large areas as well as individual houses which are a disgrace to our civilization.

I have been asked to state the reasons why Christians should take an active part in the campaign to abolish slums and overcrowding. There are two predominant reasons, justice and love. It is clearly unjust that some of the community should live in decent and comfortable surroundings while others, through no fault of their own, are compelled to live in the midst of darkness, dirt, squalor and misery. It is sometimes said that the slum dweller would make any house a slum: this is true of a few, but it is grossly untrue of the great majority of those who are living in overcrowded and insanitary dwellings. When they are given a chance most of them make good tenants. But now, try as much as they can, they are unable to secure a house at a rent which they can afford. If a few have become so habituated to their present surroundings that they prefer to remain in them, the



majority have no choice; they cannot afford the higher rents required for a better house. If they pay a higher rent their children will have to suffer in food and clothing. In many towns there are to be found in overcrowded tenements and dwellings those who would gladly pay a higher rent for better accommodation, but they cannot find the house. It is unjust that hundreds of thousands should be forced through no fault of their own to live year after year in extreme discomfort: this cannot be justified and should not be tolerated by a community which claims to be Christian. It is also against every principle of righteousness that some landlords should take advantage of the shortage of houses by charging scandalously high rents for property which they have allowed to fall into disrepair. In the name of justice, therefore, the Church should demand that large numbers of houses, at least a million, should be built to let at a low rent, to provide decent homes for the poorly paid working man with a large family and to prevent the unscrupulous type of landlord from exploiting his need.

#### The Demand of Christian Love

Equally strong is the demand which arises from Christian love. It needs some exercise of imagination for those who live in comfortable homes to realize what it means to feed and to sleep with several other persons in one or two small rooms. Home life becomes almost an impossibility: the father and the older children spend as little time as possible in their cramped rooms: the moment their meals are over they are out in the streets, not to return until bed-time: under these conditions there is no privacy and the parents have no chance of intimacy with their children. Health often suffers severely from bad housing. Investigations show that the basement child falls easily a victim to rheumatism and chest diseases: he is more prone to these illnesses than the child who is brought up in the slum above ground; while here, again, the children who live in these slums reach a lower standard of health than those who live elsewhere. The helpless children are the greatest sufferers from the slums. They are often, in their early years, crippled and handicapped for the battle of life. We should press for the abolition of the slums for the sake of the children. They are "the little ones" of the Lord. Delay means that another generation of children will grow up in surroundings which will injure their chances in life.

The Prince of Wales has called upon the members of Toc H to take their part in a great national effort. Indifference, vested interests, and ignorance will block the way of the reformer. What is wanted is a strong and enthusiastic demand that bad housing should be abolished. The demand should be intelligent, and not merely emotional and vociferous: those who make it should be acquainted both with the hard facts of the problem and with the best methods of solving it. The Christian Church should create a corporate conscience which condemns sternly the landlord who draws his rent but who evades his responsibilities: it should support the Local Authorities in the steps they take to provide good houses and to clear the slums: it should be behind the efforts of Public Utility Societies. Towards the formation of intelligent and aggressive public opinion on this huge problem Toc H has the opportunity of making a notable contribution.

CYRIL WINTON.

### III.

## Slums and Human Life

*No man sees better the effect of slums on family life, on health and on growing children than a discerning Medical Officer of Health. DR. CONNAN here writes of what he has seen in Bermondsey, a Borough in which, despite great efforts and a 7 per cent. decline in population, acute overcrowding has actually increased in the last ten years.*

WE are told on the highest authority that the poor are always with us and, as bad housing conditions are almost always associated with poverty, it seems that we may always suffer these conditions to continue. More than eighty years ago, 'Parson Lot' (Charles Kingsley) wrote a pamphlet called "*Cheap Clothes and Nasty*" about one form of sweated labour.

"One sweater I worked with had four children, and six men and they, together with his wife, sister-in-law and himself, all lived in two rooms, the largest of which was about eight feet by ten. We worked in the smallest room and slept there—all six of us. There were two turn-up beds in it and we slept three in a bed. There was no chimney and indeed no ventilation whatever. I was near losing my life there—the foul air of so many people working all day in the place and sleeping there at night was almost suffocating."

I reiterate that this pamphlet was published more than eighty years ago; since these words were written vast changes have taken place in education, in transport and means of communication and indeed in the whole structure of society. So vast and so complete has been the metamorphosis that were the writer to return to-day he would be bewildered and amazed in a world unrecognizable. Yet I believe it would be possible in London to-day to parallel the conditions described in the pamphlet of nearly a century ago. Voices other than that of Kingsley were raised against these conditions from time to time; Bills were drafted and numerous Acts of Parliament reached the statute book.

Until immediately after the war, however, the voice was in the main *vox bombinans in vacuo*, and little, if any, real change in the housing conditions of the poor was achieved. Since 1919 there has been a series of Acts and all political parties have made attempts to solve the problem, yet with only a partial success. The problem still remains and the conditions show but little improvement. If the press be the index of public opinion, it almost seems as if the public conscience were at last being aroused, for more space has been devoted in newspapers to the question of housing during the last few months than has previously been given to the subject in half a century. It remains to be seen, however, whether the present Press campaign will lead to real public enlightenment and sustained public effort. The real solution to the problem lies in the realm of the spiritual, and not until "I am my brother's keeper" in some sense more real than is at present the case, will these conditions be remedied. The problem is so vast that the only hope of its solution lies in concerted national effort; hence the importance of arousing the individual conscience so that the effort may be sustained as well as concerted.

In the creation of a slum, structural defects in the property, together with bad design and bad arrangement of the houses, play a very important part, but these

are by no means the only factors and overcrowding is at least as important and as prevalent as dilapidation. Two other points must be mentioned also, namely, the personal standards of the tenant and the poor man's budget. I know that these are not the only points open to discussion and I am aware that oceans of ink have already been splashed on these very points and that the end is not yet.

First, then, with regard to structural defects and bad arrangement—most people would define a slum as being a series of dilapidated houses badly designed and crowded together. These are elements, no doubt, in the making of a slum, but I do not know that they are even essential elements. I have certainly seen a beautifully clean "home" in the midst of such conditions. I have also seen a slum in a block of dwellings not twenty years old at the head of a Scottish loch. Life in such property, whether it be a slum or not, always means serious and dreadful inconvenience and sometimes even risk of physical harm. I have, for instance, known a blind old man living in a house the staircase of which was dilapidated and the balustrade missing. I know a row of four-roomed cottages where to step out of the back bedroom—six feet by eight, and six feet high—means a drop of two feet to the first tread. There are houses where the sky may be seen through the roof and daylight between the walls. There are others so badly arranged and so crowded together that artificial light is necessary all day long in the living room. It is always, of course, the children who suffer most and the three main defects resulting from defective structure and bad arrangement are dampness, darkness and lack of ventilation. Yet in such a structure so situated a stout-hearted woman may even make a home. Consider such conditions, however, when not one but three or four families occupy the house; then even the stoutest heart must quail. Think of a house of eight or nine rooms built for one family and now occupied by three families. The sanitary accommodation is in the yard, since more often than not there is no "inside sanitation." There is one source of water supply, also in the yard, and every drop of water for washing and cooking required on the top floor has to be carried upstairs; slops must be carried down again to be emptied in the yard. A gas stove for cooking may be installed on the landing where there is little or no light, hardly room to move and a total lack of ventilation. How could even a good cook manage under such circumstances? How can food be kept free from contamination when there is no cupboard and the food must be left in the bedroom? How is it possible to keep small children clean in such a case? Adults may wash under a tap in the yard, but can small children do so? Think of the lack of privacy—parents sleeping in the same room as growing children; adolescents of different sexes sleeping in the same bed. Remember that the middle and ground floors are similarly inhabited and that the staircase is common. Bear in mind also that many of these dwellings are verminous, bug-ridden and rat-infested. It does not require a vivid imagination to picture the conditions under which such folk have to live nor the tragedy of illness in such circumstances. We spend large sums of money in elementary education, but much of this expenditure must be futile in face of conditions like these.

The real sadness of these circumstances lies in the fact that children brought up in such an atmosphere, however much their minds may revolt, have little or no chance of learning to do better, and so the problem perpetuates itself.

I have already mentioned a third factor which helps to make, or prevent the making of, a slum, namely, the personal standards of the tenant. That this is so can be observed in almost any really bad area. Like an oasis in the desert a house will be found clean, neat and well ordered, though its structure and design is on a par with all the others in the area. This must be due in the main to the character of the tenant, enabling him, or in most cases her, to overcome difficulties which defeat the less courageous and sensitive. A very great change has been wrought by elementary education, but still more remains to be done and any spiritual influence which can be brought to bear on the rising generation will help immensely to raise housing standards.

The fourth point which I mentioned was the poor man's budget. Again and again I have met poor folk living in very bad conditions who prefer to remain in these conditions rather than move to a better house, because the higher rent means depriving their family of the necessities of life. I have known men deny themselves tobacco, and both father and mother stint themselves of food, in order to meet the weekly demand for a rent which they could not reasonably afford. Such self denial may go on for a time, but sooner or later it must lead to despair and yet it is remarkable how "eternal" hope seems to be. I am acquainted with a woman hardly yet over thirty living with her husband in a single furnished room at twelve and sixpence per week. The home is spotless and she is slowly getting together a new home. The illness and death of her only child and the coincident unemployment of her husband, "sold up" their first home, yet she is full of hope and courage.

The average comfortable Englishman, once he knows the facts, would be filled with self-contempt if he did nothing and allowed these conditions to continue. Yet what can he do? There are three things at least which any man can do. He can indicate that he is prepared to bear his part of the cost. Better than this, he can stir up himself and his neighbour to see that the public conscience, once thoroughly aroused, shall not again be stifled, and, third and last, he may perhaps be able to help in securing that spiritual revival which must be at the back of all lasting movements for human betterment.

### A Sixteenth Century Ideal

*From the description of the city of Amaurote in the Utopia of Sir Thomas More.*

"THE stretes be appointed and set forth very commodious and handsome, both for carriage and against the windes. The houses be of faire and gorgeous building, and on the strete side they stand joyned together in a long row throughout the whole strete without any partition or separation. The stretes be twenty foote brode. On the back syde of the houses throughout the whole length of the strete, lye large gardens. . . . Every house hath two doores, one into the strete, and a posterne doore on the back syde into the garden. And every tenth year they chaunge their houses by lot. They set great store by their gardens. . . . For they saye that kinge Utopus himselfe, even at the first beginning, appointed and drewe forth the platte fourme of the citie into this fashion and figure that it hath nowe, but the gallant garnishinge and the beautiful settinge forth of it, whereunto he sawe that one manne's age would not suffice; that he left to his posteritie."

# WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

## National Housing Policy since the War

*This article is concerned only with facts. It makes no attempt at criticism. Readers may well think it dull. Nevertheless it should be read, for Toc H cannot help usefully unless it takes the trouble to understand how the present position has been reached.*

IN 1919 the nation was confronted by an acute shortage of houses, due to many causes, including the cessation of building during the war. At the same time, building costs were double those of 1914 and public opinion was strongly insisting on a new and better standard of accommodation. It was obvious to everybody that private enterprise, faced with these costs, and naturally desiring an economic return on its outlay, could not produce houses of the kind required to let at a low enough rent. Government aid was imperative.

To meet this situation the ADDISON ACT was passed in 1919. This imposed the duty of providing working-class houses on local authorities, and the Government agreed to meet the whole of the annual loss beyond the product of a local penny rate. Shortly, the effect of this drive at such a time was to make the demand for houses greatly exceed the capacity of the industry to supply. Costs rose to something like three times those of pre-war days. The total number of houses built under the Addison Act was 213,821, and the cost to the rates and taxes is about £8,000,000 annually for 60 years. In 1921 the scheme was terminated, and with the slackening of demand costs fell.

The next step was the CHAMBERLAIN ACT of 1923, which provided a subsidy equivalent to £75 for houses of a certain specification built by private enterprise or local authorities. The houses might be sold or let. Under this Act (which came to an end in 1929) 351,232 houses were privately built, 75,309 by local authorities, 11,506 by Public Utility Societies. The present annual charge on the taxes under this Act is approximately £2,500,000. It will be seen that this Act threw the main emphasis back on to private enterprise.

The WHEATLEY ACT of 1924 reversed this process. Its author was of opinion that previous operations had failed to produce houses to let within the capacity of the poorer workers. He therefore practically doubled the Chamberlain subsidy for houses of this type built by local authorities. At the same time he induced the building trade unions to agree to augment the capacity of the industry. Under this Act 469,704 houses were built by local authorities, 11,256 by private enterprise, and 2,124 by Public Utility Societies, up to the end of September, 1933. But the increased demand once more raised costs from about £350 (for a non-parlour house) in 1923 to about £413 in 1927. This increase of cost resulted in a corresponding diminution of the effect of the subsidy in reducing rents. In 1927 the subsidy under both Acts was reduced. Costs fell by 1929 to nearly the 1923 level, but the rate of building fell at once by 100,000 houses in 1928. The present annual cost to the Exchequer of houses built under the Wheatley Act is about £4,000,000.

The next move came in 1930 with the GREENWOOD ACT. This was designed not to encourage building of low-rented houses in general but specifically to accelerate

the clearance of slums. The Act is exceedingly complex and it is impossible here to do more than give a general outline of its method. It envisages three broad lines of attack: first, the *Clearance Area*, so bad that absolute destruction is the only remedy: secondly, the *Improvement Area*, where conditions can be remedied without wholesale destruction: thirdly, the *individual insanitary house*, needing either demolition or reconstruction. The subsidy is given on a new principle, a grant of 45/- per annum for 40 years for each person re-housed (on the basis of providing one three-bedroomed house for every five persons). It should be made clear that the subsidy attaches to the new house, and is not necessarily dependent on its occupation by the same individuals who were removed from the old slum. Up to September, 1933, 11,796 houses have been built by local authorities under this Act, and 72 by private enterprise.

It is under this (the Greenwood) Act that the present Government is now calling on local authorities to submit programmes for slum clearance for five years ahead. Their policy is to concentrate the efforts of local authorities on slum clearance and consequent re-housing, and to rely on private enterprise to construct, and the building societies to finance, a sufficiency of houses to let as well as for sale. To this end the HOUSING (FINANCIAL PROVISIONS) ACT, 1933, abolishes the Wheatley subsidy, and gives power to local authorities to guarantee in certain conditions losses on a part of the advances made by building societies. The practical effect of these guarantees in stimulating housing at low rents cannot yet be judged.

The total of houses erected with State aid under the foregoing Acts since the war is 1,146,820 at the end of September, 1933. In addition, 940,686 houses (below a rateable value of £78—in the Metropolitan Police District £105) have been built by private enterprise without State assistance. The total national housing effort therefore is 2,087,506 houses. Yet it is acknowledged on all hands that the problem of the slum is still unsolved. It is beyond the scope of this article to suggest detailed reasons for this situation, but it seems clear that the main causes are to be found in (1) the fact that the number of families has increased at a much greater rate than the number of persons, with a resulting increase in overcrowding; (2) that all the efforts made since the war have failed to produce enough houses at sufficiently low rents to enable the worse paid workers to occupy them. The local facts under these two heads require the most careful study before any true view can be formed of the extent of the problem in any given place and the remedies required.

## Rural Housing

**T**HERE are two distinct branches of rural housing; one is rural in name only, being due to an influx of urban population to areas which are administered by Rural District Councils. The other comprises the homes of the rural workers and is the subject of these notes. The HOUSING ACT, 1930, made County Councils responsible for reviewing housing conditions in rural districts, and of satisfying themselves that the accommodation is suitable and sufficient. If a Rural District Council fails to make adequate provision of houses, the County Council may take over the duty. Similarly, if the County Council makes default the Minister of Health may make an order requiring them to exercise their duties or he may make them exercisable by himself.



## The Machinery of Rural Housing

Stated very briefly, the position of rural housing after the passing of the HOUSING (FINANCIAL PROVISIONS) ACT, 1933, is:—

### *New Houses.*

- (a) Exchequer subsidies are withdrawn.
- (b) If provided by private enterprise, the Exchequer will, under certain conditions, share with the Local Authority or County Council the liability incurred by advances made by Building Societies.
- (c) If provided by Rural District Councils, they must finance them unless
  - (1) they replace slum property for which assistance is given by the HOUSING ACT, 1930;
  - (2) being included in an approved scheme, they were eligible for special assistance under the HOUSING (RURAL AUTHORITIES) ACT, 1931 (now expired);
  - (3) they were included in an approved scheme eligible for subsidy under the HOUSING (FINANCIAL PROVISIONS), ACT, 1924, by virtue of being submitted or being ready for submission by December, 1932.

### *Old Houses.*

- (d) Can be re-conditioned by their owners and are eligible for grants under the HOUSING (RURAL WORKERS') ACTS, 1926 and 1931.
- (e) May be purchased by Rural District Councils under Part III of the HOUSING ACT, 1925, and be re-conditioned by them under the Rural Workers' Acts.

The RURAL WORKERS' ACTS were passed to allow the re-conditioning of rural houses and the conversion into houses of buildings not previously so used. Briefly, assistance is given by the Local Authority by both grants and loans or by either.

*Grants* (of which the Government pay half) may not exceed either:

- (1) two-thirds of the estimated cost of the works; or
- (2) the sum of £100 for each dwelling.

Conditions, applicable for twenty years, are attached to grants; the chief being:

- (a) that a dwelling shall be occupied by an agricultural worker or person in substantially the same economic circumstances;
- (b) that the rent shall not exceed the normal agricultural rent of the district plus three per cent. of the applicants' share of the estimated outlay.

*Loans*, speaking generally, are subject to conditions similar to those set out in Section 92 of the HOUSING ACT, 1925. Assistance is not given for works of ordinary repair and upkeep, except so far as they may be incidental to reconstruction, and may not be given:

- i. where the value of the completed building will exceed £400;
- ii. where the estimated expenditure is less than £50;
- iii. unless, when complete, the house will be in all respects fit for human habitation.

The HOUSING ACT, 1930, has as its chief objects:

- (1) to simplify the procedure of slum clearance;
- (2) to prevent the creation of new slums by prescribing "Improvement" areas;
- (3) to overcome the shortage of houses in rural areas.

Space does not permit details of the assistance given to Local Authorities under this act, but it has been stated officially that the subsidy would, if five persons were displaced from a house, amount to a subsidized rent of about 5s. a week for forty years.

What has been done

Under the ADDISON and the CHAMBERLAIN Acts the contributions to the housing of agricultural workers was negligible. Up to November 30, 1933, 28,022 houses had been built in agricultural parishes under the WHEATLEY ACT; and 77 under the Act of 1930. Of these, very few were built by private enterprise and many of them are not tenanted by rural workers. By September 30, 1933, 10,662 applications under the RURAL WORKERS' ACTS were received. Assistance was promised in respect of 7,104 of these; work was complete on 6,202 dwellings, and in progress on 670. The total amount of assistance given and promised was £582,201. Particulars of the geographical distribution of these houses are not available, but in Devon up to January 6, 1934, 1,564 applications were received. Of these, 1,074 are approved or provisionally approved, and work on 937 dwellings is complete. The average cost of re-conditioning each dwelling was £195 8s. 10. The County share of the expenditure represents a rate of about one-third of a penny in the £ for twenty years; so that a ratepayer assessed at £50 net contributes the equivalent of one and a half ounces of tobacco annually.

What more can be done?

The salient fact which emerges from these notes appears to be that there are two phases of the rural housing question—the amendment of past neglect, and the building of new houses other than replacements. Existing legislation is designed to deal first with the former phase; and it is adequate for the purpose if only the powers are used. No limit is placed upon the number of houses that may be dealt with, but hitherto activity has been unevenly distributed. Concerted effort is necessary, for it is inconceivable that dilapidated houses are confined to a few parts of the country, or that slum dwellings are solely an urban feature. If there are those who hold this view, a study of the annual reports of Medical Officers of Health will bring speedy disillusionment.

A feature of the 1933 Act is that work under the RURAL WORKERS' ACT and the Act of 1930 is to be stimulated, and local authorities have to submit schemes. It is probable, therefore, that the release of these schemes will result in the speeding up of laggard authorities. But the process can be hastened where necessary by outside help. Parish Councils should be urged to comb their areas and report unsatisfactory houses to their District Councils. If this is ineffective, they can make representation to the County Council; and if this also fails to bring result, they can appeal to the Minister of Health, with the knowledge that a National

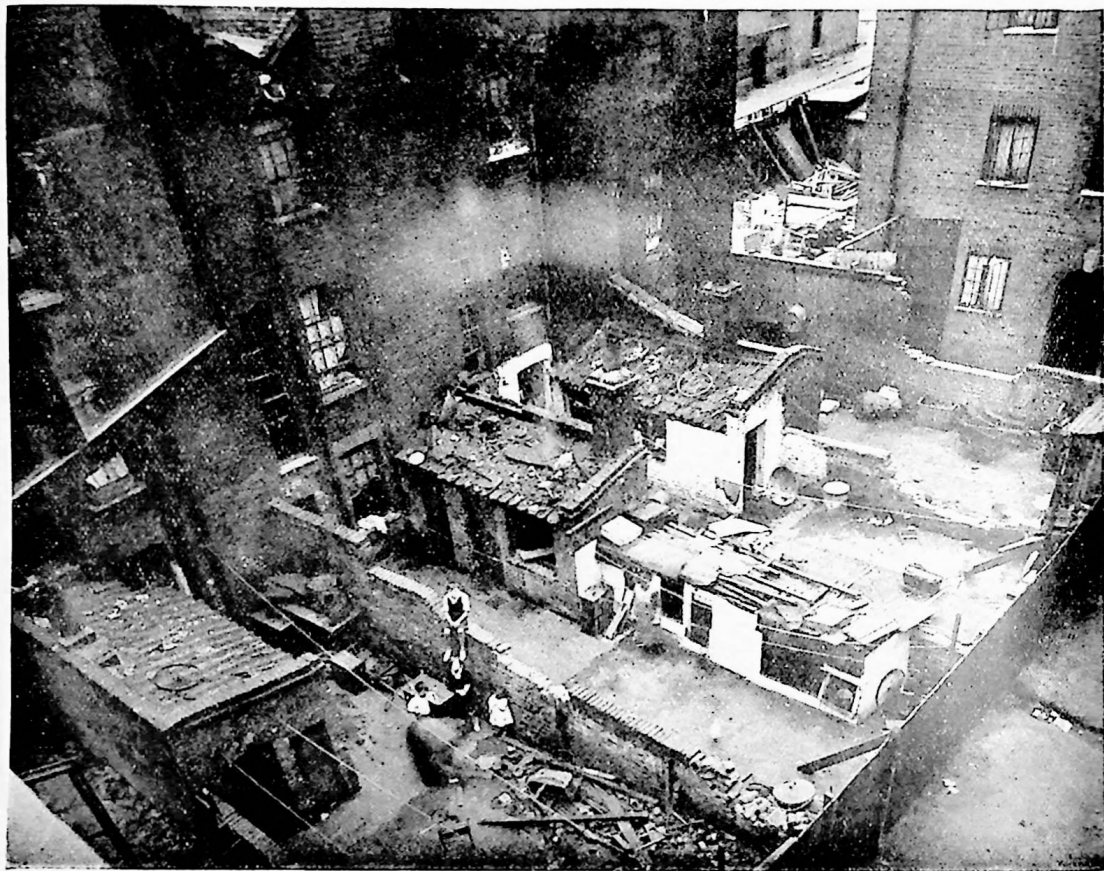


(Photo., Percy Morris).

(Reproduced by permission of "Country Life").

BEFORE AND AFTER.

A squalid cottage in the country reconstructed and made habitable.



(Photo., St. Pancras House Improvement Society).

SHALL THIS REMAIN?

Government is pledged to move in this matter, and Public Opinion is behind them. In short, by using every legitimate spur they can to make it thoroughly uncomfortable for the responsible authority to "sit on the fence."

Present legislation, therefore, may be regarded as an opportunity for Rural District Councils to put their houses in order, and to show that, given the means, they have the initiative to use them. On the other hand, the problem of new houses (other than replacements) to let at rentals of from 4/- to 5/- a week is unsolved. It is rendered more difficult by a decrease of population in some rural districts, and a transitional period is not the time to form reliable estimates of later needs. Nevertheless, the second phase will inevitably arise if the agricultural outlook continues to improve. Whether under increased prosperity it might be possible for the Central Boards of a planned agricultural industry to set up a Housing Corporation to meet its own housing needs is a question that the writer is not competent to discuss.

Meanwhile, we should bear in mind that it is a National and an economic necessity that the land shall maintain a thriving agricultural population and each of us should do everything in his power to help forward the work of providing decent homes for the rural workers, for they are a long suffering, a deserving and indispensable section of the community.

PERCY MORRIS, F.R.I.B.A. (*Late County Architect for Devon*).

## A Housing Society at Work

I AM writing this article just before the Commemoration of a day when a woman was told on the eve of the Birth of her Child that there was no room for her, but that she might go over to the stable. I hear that Child, grown to be a Man, saying, "I was a stranger and ye took me not in. . . Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it not to Me."

And the writer has had scores of women, just before the birth of their child, coming and begging for a house and has had to say he is unable to help, and there is no room where the family is now, not even for a tiny baby, so they must leave their present house or lodgings and go where they can.

That is the kind of background that spurs some of us on in our work in connection with Public Utility Societies. We can do little; in the end the Housing Problem can only be solved by the nation, but meanwhile, here and there, one and another can be provided with a decent home while the Public Authorities are trying to find the wisest way of dealing with things on a large scale. For the housing problem is in all kinds of ways a moving and not a static one. Children are being born, growing up—yes, and dying, in houses that in themselves are growing steadily worse. Year by year the overcrowding gets worse through the steadily increasing population, and especially the steadily increasing number of families. Year by year houses that ten years ago were bad are now hopeless, and houses that were possible ten years ago are now earning their old-age pension. Nothing stands still in the housing problem and that is why everything that is done to-day is so vitally valuable, even though a hundred things are planned to be done to-morrow.

So much in a general way. I have been asked to write about the work of Manchester Housing (1926), Ltd. The date of its origin and place of its work are seen in its title, but this is only an illustration. There are nearly 200 such societies at work up and down England in most of the large towns, and a list of some of these is printed at the end of this article. So, in writing of this society I am only using it as an illustration of what is being done in many places, though in varying ways. Housing societies have raised over a million of capital, built nearly 10,000 houses, over 1,000 flats, converted and reconditioned nearly 2,000 houses and flats.

*First, what is a Public Utility Society?* It is a society registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893-1913, for a specific purpose. The societies we are concerned with are engaged in various forms of house building or reconditioning. The capital is divided into share capital with a maximum dividend, and loan stock with a fixed rate of interest. These rates are subject to the regulation of the Treasury, and may not exceed the rate fixed by the Treasury, but may, of course—and in many cases do—come below it. No one may hold more than 200 shares, but anyone may hold any amount of loan stock. The purpose of this regulation is to prevent any person or group of persons gaining a controlling interest in the Society and possibly deflecting it from the purpose which it was established to achieve. Such a society can be registered for a reduced sum of £7 10s. od. through the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association if their model rates are adopted, and can be authorised to issue a very large amount of capital. For instance, the Manchester Society is authorised to issue 100,000 £1 shares, and £250,000 loan stock. The present amount issued is some 11,000 shares and £20,000 loan stock, so we can go on extending our work for a good long time.

The Manchester Society of which I am asked to write was the outcome of a Conference held in Manchester after the great C.O.P.E.C. Conference in Birmingham. The Local Council of Christian Congregations took the matter up and got the Society registered. Then, when once registered, the Society went off on its own, though it keeps up its connection with the Council of Christian Congregations through some members of its Committee being also on the Executive of the Council.

A first scheme for the twenty-four houses was planned in 1926. After enquiries among those likely to help we then organised a public meeting with promise of some £3,000 and left the meeting with promises of another £3,000. Feeling that we were justified in going ahead, we started building. The type chosen was the three-bedroomed, non-parlour type, as being most suitable for our purpose. They were definitely built to help those whose needs are greatest, viz., people with large families and low incomes. Before these houses were completed we found we had sufficient capital to justify a further twenty-eight houses. This time we built four four-bedroomed houses, and in these fifty-two houses we have a population of just over four hundred men, women and children, not one of whom could have hoped to have had a Municipal House, as they could not have afforded the rents.

This brings me to the second point. Our Society, like most other such societies, aims at letting houses within the reach of the lower paid wage-earner. This is



achieved by the shareholders and stockholders being content with a very modest return on their capital. At a time when the Public Authorities were borrowing at 5 to 5½ per cent., we fixed our maximum dividend at 2½ per cent. and our Loan Stock interest at the same amount. We got the same subsidies as the Local Authority, under the WHEATLEY ACT, and consequently as houses were then costing about £500, including land, sewers, street works, etc., our interest charges were some £12 10s. od. per annum less than the Local Authority and this difference was reflected in the rents, from 10/1d. to 10/9d. inclusive of rates as against 13/6d. to 16/0d. or more for Municipal houses.

A third scheme was put in hand last Autumn for thirty-two houses, of which seven will have four bedrooms, and will be let at 10/3d. and 11/3d. per house. It is hoped that these will be occupied early in the New Year.

Then comes the problem of tenancy. It is sometimes said that folk are content to remain where they are. Some few may be, but not the vast majority. A little three-lined advertisement in the local daily papers brought 300 applications by the first possible post, within a week 1,000 had come in and since the list was closed there have been hundreds more. When we know the amount of effort and publicity required to gather folk for even a good entertainment, let alone any more serious kind of meeting, the facts speak for themselves. These figures apply to our last scheme, and we are busy now trying to see how best to fit some 1,000 applicants (and each applicant means a family) into the thirty-two houses at our disposal. We had the same experience with each of the previous schemes, and many of the last applicants state that they applied for each of the previous schemes and in one way or another their circumstances have grown worse. Either the family has increased, or the house has become more dilapidated, or perhaps there is no house and they are in rooms moving from place to place, only too often finding each change a change for the worse.

*How do we select our tenants?* In the first place we rigidly insist that houses are only let to folk who have absolute need of three bedrooms. That does not mean there are not thousands of small families who need better housing accommodation most urgently, but with a small scheme we felt it best to concentrate on one particular need, that is of families with several children of different sexes. Then we rule out all those whose income might enable them to have a municipal house when their turn comes. We also take into account all sorts of other matters. Scores of cases are urgently commended by medical men, and to these we give every consideration. Many clergy and ministers commend their church officers, Sunday School teachers, etc. To these we pay less attention. Though glad to have testimonials as a general character, we are not concerned with the religious profession of the applicant, but only with his need. Then all kinds of people tell us that the applicant they recommend is one entirely suitable for our Society. We sometimes wish that those who write such letters were as ready to commend our scheme to their purses as they are to commend their protégés to us as tenants. The applicants left on the short list are interviewed and finally selected. Though we are conscious that after all the sifting there are at least four times as many whom we have had to refuse whom we might just as well have selected.

The interviews sometimes bring out many details that the application forms or letters have not disclosed, though many of the letters are pitiable reading; families rescued from houses, verminous, decrepit and insanitary; families that had never had a home of their own; families that had lived squandered among various relatives and had not been together for years. Not a single one of these tenants had had a home worth calling a home till they got one of our houses.

*Do these kind of people make satisfactory tenants?* Of course, when you have to select thirty-two tenants out of a thousand you do try to get those who seem most likely to take advantage of their chances. In the houses already occupied we have had two tenants whom we had reluctantly to get rid of, and one or two more give a certain amount of anxiety. But with a rental of some £1,300 a year the total accumulated arrears after six years only amount to some £15, although a large number are out of work and the rest are on very low wages. On the whole, it is true that most folk if they get a decent thing will try to take care of it if they know how, so the need of efficient property management is essential. Fortunately, we have in Manchester another society working on Octavia Hill lines (for the Octavia Hill Management, see page 68) and this society acts as our agent and manages the property for us. Some friends of the Society, with the help of the head gardener of one of the Municipal parks, have organised a garden guild. Tools are bought by the guild, rollers, mowing machines, wheelbarrows, etc., and competitions are held to encourage the care of the gardens. There is also a little extra land which is let out in allotments to those tenants whose energy is sufficient to undertake one in addition to their garden, and these have proved very successful.

*Is this kind of thing worth while?* The municipalities are building houses by thousands; we have built eighty-four. It must be remembered, however, that the value of such work is not to be measured by the number of houses built. The publicity work in connection with the Society gives wide scope for the education of public opinion, for those who help the scheme become keenly interested in the problem. Other means of helping towards a solution of the problem are gradually discovered: Housing Surveys, Housing Bureaux, and in Manchester we have a Better Housing Council. Though it would be idle to suggest that the Public Utility Society is the *fons et origo* of all this, yet it has most unquestioningly contributed towards the growing public opinion that is at last beginning to understand that the solution of the housing problem is possible provided there is only enough goodwill among the people to accomplish it.

*This is the story, what can be done about it?* In the first place the study of the problem by a much larger number of people than at present know anything about it is essential. All kinds of fairy tales, coming for the most part from interested quarters, can only be dealt with by those who have knowledge: such tales as the matter of expense, that folk in the slums prefer to stay there and anyway they will only make slums wherever they go; how to appraise rightly the justice to be done to tenant and landlord alike, particularly to the former, and so on.

*Then, opportunities for service.* In each locality the Society could digest the help of keen Toc H men, if they really meant business, and many Branches and Groups might find ways of helping up the capital of the local society, for most societies

are considerably helped by donations. In Manchester we have had some £3,000 in donations, of which some £150 has come in pence. We sing often enough about building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land. The bow of shining gold, the arrows of desire will soon do the trick if the bow is strong enough and the arrows are aimed straight.

CANON T. SHIMWELL.

### Public Utility Societies

Altrincham & District C.O.P.E.C. Housing Society, Ltd., 21, Kingsway, Altrincham, Cheshire.  
 Aylesbury Housing Improvement Trust, Ltd., Norwood, Mandeville Road, Aylesbury.  
 Bangor Copec Housing Society Ltd., Brynhyfryd, Bangor.  
 Bath Tenements Venture, 13, Darlington Place, Bath.  
 Bethnal Green Housing Association, Ltd., 21, Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green, E.C.2.  
 Birmingham Copec House Improvement Society, 297, Broad Street, Birmingham.  
 Boston Housing Society, Ltd., 1, Church Lane, Boston, Lincs.  
 Bristol Churches Tenement Association, 9, Park Street, Bristol.  
 Cambridge Housing Society, Ltd., 99, Chesterton Road, Cambridge.  
 Carlisle Housing Improvement Society, Ltd., 10, Victoria Place, Carlisle.  
 Chelsea Housing Improvement Society, 348, King's Road, Chelsea, S.W.3.  
 Church Army Housing, Ltd., 55, Bryanston Street, Marble Arch, W.1.  
 Coventry House Improvement Society Ltd., 26, Trinity Churchyard, Coventry.  
 Crediton Housing Association, Ltd., 31, High Street Crediton.  
 Edinburgh Welfare Housing Trust, Ltd., 14, Rutland Square, Edinburgh.  
 Exeter Workmen's Dwellings Co., Ltd., 19, Bedford Circus, Exeter.  
 Fulham Housing Improvement Society Ltd., 378, Lillie Road, Fulham, S.W.6.  
 Grantham Voluntary Housing Committee.  
 Hampstead Housing Association, Ltd., 1, Lawrence Pountney Hill, Cannon Street, E.C.4.  
 Henley & District Housing Trust, Town Hall, Henley-on-Thames.  
 Hoylake & West Kirby Housing Society, Ltd., 13, Union Court, Castle Street, Liverpool.  
 St. Helens Housing, Ltd., Association Buildings, Y.M.C.A., North Road, St. Helens.  
 Improved Tenements Association, Ltd., 4, New Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.  
 Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes, Incorporated, 4, Bloomsbury Mansions, Hart Street, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1.  
 Kendal & District Housing Society, Ltd., 22A, Highgate, Kendal.  
 Kensington Housing Trust, Ltd., 138, Portobello Road, N.W.11.  
 Lambeth Housing, Ltd., 11, Stockwell Park Crescent, S.W.9.  
 Liverpool Improved Houses, Ltd., 8B, Rumford Place, Liverpool.  
 Lincoln Voluntary Slum Clearance Committee.  
 London Housing Society, Ltd., 116, Judd Street, W.C.1.  
 Leamington Slum Clearance, Ltd., 38, The Parade, Leamington Spa.  
 Leicester Voluntary Housing Association, Ltd., 1, Berridge Street, Leicester.  
 Market Drayton Housing Society, Ltd., 2, Church Street, Market Drayton, Salop.  
 Manchester Housing (1926), Ltd., 55, Brown Street, Manchester 2.  
 St. Marylebone Housing Association, 5, Constance House, Salisbury Square, N.W.8.  
 Neston & Parkgate Housing Society, Ltd., 25, Water Street, Liverpool.  
 Newcastle-on-Tyne Housing Improvement Trust, Ltd., 18, Ellison Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne.  
 Nottingham Housing Improvement Association, Ltd., 19, Park Row, Nottingham.  
 Oswestry Housing Trust, Guildhall, Oswestry.  
 St. Pancras House Improvement Society, Ltd., 96, Seymour Street, Euston, N.W.1.  
 Presbyterian Housing, Ltd., 47, Gresham Street, E.C.2.  
 Ripon Housing Improvement Trust, Ltd., 31, Market Square, Ripon.  
 Salisbury Courts, Ltd., 37, The Close, Salisbury.  
 Shrewsbury Housing Trust, 11, Market Street, Shrewsbury.  
 The Square Building Trust, 19, Northumberland Square, North Shields.  
 Salford Housing Co. Ltd., 7, Chapel Walks, Manchester 2.  
 Stepney Housing Trust, Ltd., 28/29, St. Swithin's Lane, E.C.4.  
 Tring Housing Improvement Association, Banbury, Tring.  
 The Thistle Property Trust, Cranstonhill, Stirling.  
 United Women's Homes Association, Murray House, Vandon Street, Buckingham Gate, S.W.1.  
 Willesden Housing Society, Ltd., 3, Station Road, Harlesden, N.W.10.  
 Wimbledon Public Utility Society, Ltd., 64A, Hill Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.  
 Worcester House Improvement Society, 45, Foregate Street, Worcester.  
 The Welsh Town Planning & Housing Trust, Ltd., 6, Cathedral Road, Cardiff.  
 York House Improvement Society, Ltd., 11, Castlegate, York.

[The above list, which is representative, but not complete, is compiled from "War Against the Slums," by T. SPEAKE, F.S.I.A., with the author's kind permission.]

## The Octavia Hill System of Estate Management

**T**HAT the successful management of working-class property requires the spirit of human fellowship was first expressed as a principle by Octavia Hill. Though management must be regarded definitely as a business, it is impossible to establish it solely on a money basis, because in the tenancy of a house there is such an immensely large part of the ordinary life of the home.

Personal relations must be of the first importance where people live in close contact, where the character of tenants is expressed in the care of the house and where people in their turn are affected by the condition of their dwellings and the personalities of their neighbours. The core of the system first associated with the name of Octavia Hill is the personal relation of manager and tenant. The manager is the landlord's agent and applies to the care of the property, in addition to the usual technical knowledge of repairs and rents, a personal knowledge of the needs of each tenant or applicant for tenancy. This means that the well-being of the whole estate can be considered by the satisfying of the requirements of each individual tenant and that conflicting interests between tenants can be adjusted by an authority conscious of their particular difficulties.

The work is, in form, that of any agent to a landlord. Octavia Hill realised that such work called for a fully educated and trained person to deal adequately with the variety of problems, and that as social work was at that time—the 'sixties of last century—mainly the concern of women, it should be educated women who should apply the spirit of social service to the relationship of landlord and tenant.

The early work was done on old property, where tenants were already living and where the first essential was to introduce a regular habit of rent paying by personal collection, and a high standard of maintenance by the closest attention to repairs. On modern estates, whether laid out by Local Authorities or by large owners such as the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the selection and suitable grouping of tenants is of the first importance. In slum clearance the actual tenants have, of course, to be rehoused, but the grouping need not be mechanical, as it so often is in the large-scale operations of a big authority. The trained manager takes account of personal needs and preferences and places the tenants accordingly. Attention to repairs is just as necessary on new estates, where neglect will have to be paid for in the long run. Accuracy in accounting will secure the trust of the tenant, when pains are taken to make sure that his book agrees with the collector's. This must be combined with a firmness in insisting on his keeping the rules of tenancy which does not shrink finally from legal proceedings if other methods fail.

In the weekly contact of manager with tenant their mutual obligations should be fulfilled. The regular payment of rent is the most obvious of these. This is, of course, a characteristic of properties well managed on any lines, but it is generally a fresh idea to the tenant coming for the first time under the Octavia Hill system that the landlord's obligations on the other side should be scrupulously fulfilled. The first reason for this is justice, that anyone paying his just due should receive in return the prompt attention to repairs to which he is thereby entitled. There is also a business reason which commonsense ought to dictate. Precise attention

to repairs will raise the standard of the property and consequently in the long run increase its value. Nothing strikes the manager more forcibly than the average standard of neglect in working-class property, neglect which brings houses down to slum level, or, at the least, leaves the owner with an asset of constantly diminishing value.

Thus, human values and economic interest are seen to be interwoven, and a policy which aims first at mutual justice is that which creates the truest wealth both human and economic. Evidence of the value of this method is best afforded by the condition of estates which have been managed on these lines over a long period, the suitability of the tenants to their environment, the general interest shown in the maintenance of a good standard and the almost automatic regularity of payments as a thing expected and conceded as of undisputed right. Some figures may, however, help to prove the matter.

Of pre-war built property, a group of twenty four-roomed cottages, built in 1889 and let in London at an inclusive rent of 14/3d. each, brings to the landlord an annual return of 83 per cent. on the present valuation, while the tenant has a comfortable and private family dwelling at a rent remarkably low for central London. In a leasehold property of twenty-four flats, built in 1901 on a building lease for 79 years at a cost of £5,000, the owner is receiving 8.3 per cent. return as well as the repayment of capital, although the rents have never been raised the full 40 per cent. allowed by the Rent Restriction Acts. It is less easy to judge of property built under post-war conditions as sufficient time has not elapsed to allow a complete assessment of the results. Public Utility Societies, where the property is managed on these lines can, however, show an encouraging return. One formed for the purpose of reconditioning has shown a return of 4 per cent. on capital for some long time, leasehold redemption being fully provided for, and some balance carried forward to extend the work. In new construction where a three-roomed flat can be let for 13/6d. inclusive, the Society has paid a dividend of 3 per cent. since its inception.

Where leases have fallen in and the owner has availed himself of the opportunity to control the houses, an adequate sum spent on putting them into a state of habitable repair can add enormously to the comfort of the tenants and yet be an economic proposition. With £80 spent on each house and an average rent (in a provincial city) of under 10/- a week, a return of 5 per cent. and over can be shown on the capital value of the property.

To exhibit primarily financial results, stress has been laid on the rent collection and repair side of management, but the other duties of a manager contribute in no less degree to the well being of a housing estate. In new estates the selection and grouping of tenants to accord with their environment produces content and stability and the care of the amenities of the estate. At the same time the taking over of old property in bad condition and with tenants unused to any care and interest is the acid test of a manager. Here there can be no selection, only patience and wisdom in dealing with difficult characters. If success is achieved it will mean that difficulties have been dealt with *in situ*, conditions improved for those actually suffering from previous neglect, and better dwellings achieved with no increase of

rent. The owner may have to take a long view and recognise that immediate expense must be faced in repairs and even in loss of rent where the most profitable form of letting is not the first concern. But in the long run he will have not only satisfied tenants but an economic asset in an established property and reasonable return on his capital.

The Society of Women Housing Estate Managers, 36, Victoria Street, S.W.1, is formed of women managing on these lines and can supply further information on this subject.

J. URCORR.

## Toc H - To Create Homes

OF those who sat in the Albert Hall on December 9, 1933, and listened to the voice of our Royal Patron as he issued his challenge on Slum Clearance and Housing, none could fail to recognise that this challenge came to Toc H from a sincerity born of deep knowledge and personal experience. Toc H accepted that challenge with applause that must have shaken the very walls, and already we are trying to work out just what part we can take, both as individuals and as units, to justify the faith put in us.

It seems to me a tremendous pity that brevity of speech has enabled that word 'housing' to stand for all that underlies the efforts of this generation to wipe out slum dwellings and slum conditions of living. 'Home Building'—'Slum Clearance and Home Building'—is surely a more accurate description of the motives which prompt our efforts. Having read so far you will perhaps be tempted to accuse me of bickering about words, but I think I can show that the difference is absolutely vital.

If the focus point of the mind of Toc H is to be 'houses,' Toc H will achieve very little more than help to perpetuate a past which has resulted in the removal of one problem, only to replace it with many new ones equally serious and challenging to any thinking individual. Of course, in due time, we should help to produce more houses, but England does not need mere houses—England needs homes.

The abolition of slums and overcrowded areas has behind it a fundamental objective, and the recognition of that objective is surely the first duty, both to the past and the future, of any who would set out to carry on the work which has already been done by progressive building on the experience of the past. That fundamental objective is to give all people fair and equal conditions and opportunities wherein to develop physically, mentally and spiritually into better citizenship—opportunities to learn to enjoy the sheer thrill of living and of useful service to the community.

I have had personal contact with several large municipal housing estates, and, without in any way depreciating the good work that has been done by the provision of well-planned and excellently built houses, it is quite true to say that very little thought has been given to the equally important question of the development of the social life of the residents of these estates. I believe this is true of by far the greater number of new housing estates throughout the country, and the results are tragic, especially for the younger generation growing up. It is just as difficult



to find in life the things that are most worth having in the frozen atmosphere of some of these housing estates as it is in the squalid atmosphere of the slum. The use of that word 'frozen' is not an exaggeration of the actual situation. Anyone who sets out to attempt to work upon these estates will immediately be confronted by tremendous difficulties. It is literally true that great masses of people have been moved from their old homes, their old surroundings and associations, and dumped on the outskirts of our great cities without any sort of provision being made for the development of the social life of the people concerned, and without any thought as to the care of youth outside elementary schools. Perhaps the best way to bring emphasis to this side of the home building problem is to quote a personal experience with one of the largest new Municipal Housing Estates in the East Midlands.

It is four years now since I went to live near this particular estate, and at the same time to start to build a unit of Toc H. This estate is municipally developed and of some 5,000 houses. It is on the outskirts of an old city and can best be likened to a new town built on the side of the old city. The residents have been brought from all parts of the town—some from slum areas and overcrowded centres, whilst others have been given houses on the grounds of their personal needs, e.g., married people living with their parents, etc. From an architectural standpoint this estate is an achievement to be proud of, but on the whole of the estate there is not a single building that can be used for social functions except the Elementary School rooms, for which one has to pay rather heavily.\* From this the first problem of Toc H will be recognised, *viz.*, that of finding a room wherein to meet.

We started off, meeting at a member's house, then we got into an old barn for three months until this was demolished, and then had to travel three miles for our next meeting place in the school room of the Church off the estate. At present we are in yet another barn, again off the estate, but nearer to the heart of things, but, unfortunately, still awaiting demolition instructions which will move us again we know not where. Coming up against this problem so early, finding that we could not run a boys' club nor get a scout troop going because of the same difficulties, we set out to endeavour to get established a sort of Community Centre which would ultimately belong to the residents and be a centre for every sort of social life both for young and old. We had, at various meetings, the Chairman of the City Housing Committee, the President of the Rotary Club, and the Secretary of the Rural Community Council, with whom we talked freely about the whole situation. At their suggestion we set out to form a Community Council made up of representatives from among the residents and of organisations who had—or were likely to have—interest in this estate. We reached the point where the necessary money for building the centre was either promised or guaranteed, and the salary for a full-time man was included for twelve months, but all this carried a proviso that we must prove that the residents actually wanted this centre. Apathy stepped in and, at any rate temporarily, prevented our dreams from being realised, and the Community Council, after two years' work, closed down with many accomplishments to its credit, but having failed to overcome apathy.

\* In fairness to the Municipal Housing Committee, it should be made clear that it has no statutory power to do anything in the matter, which, of course, emphasizes the need for working on the public conscience.

After much thought and discussion we recognised that it would be unfair to blame the residents for an apathy which was but the natural result of lack of knowledge, and of fellowship. Our methods had to be changed and directed into smaller, yet more direct channels, and above all things we had to win the confidence and friendship of the people concerned. A Study Circle, consisting of Toc H together with six representatives of our L.W.H., was at this point formed to make a careful study of the situation. Half of this study was devoted to literature which would better fit us for the task we had in hand, whilst the second half was allocated entirely to the study of local conditions, including a social survey of the estate and the surrounding area. Those activities, which were at work around the estate, were all listed and two representatives sent out to visit each of these with the object of getting to know them, their difficulties and their needs, this at the same time enabling us to make an analysis as to what sections of the community were in any way catered for and to what extent.

It is impossible to deal with this in detail here, suffice it to say that we received a wonderful reception everywhere, and many very good friendships have been made, whilst, on the practical side, we have now complete knowledge of every detail concerning social work being done and, what is perhaps more important, we know the actual needs. The next step was to start supplying these needs. A Scout Troop was obviously urgent, boys wanted to be scouts. One of our members, living on the estate, gave up his front room for a temporary club room, had his knees well washed, and became a full-blown scoutmaster. Co-operation with the Adult School produced a concert to find funds to start them off with equipment. The Y.W.C.A. still meet in this member's front room.

An estate of this kind naturally includes blind and crippled persons. A member of L.W.H. became an almoner to the estate for the Blind Institution and regularly visits the blind members of this community. The gardens of such people needed putting in order, digging and planting, and doing this not only helped us to develop our muscles but helped us to make many friends amongst the neighbours of our crippled friends, who, knowing what we were doing, brought along their spades to lend a hand. On one memorable afternoon, when four of our boys were up against a real tough garden, before they had worked the first hour, half the male population in the street had joined in. A later development is the running of dances, whist drives and concerts, at charges that just cover the cost, among the residents. For this purpose we hire the Elementary School. By gradually bringing the residents on to the committee of management we hope eventually to hand things over to them as a going concern.

Another need revealed, by this social survey, was for Sunday School teachers. One Padre was discovered with over a hundred children and not a single helper. We were able to provide him with a superintendent and one teacher, and this school is now extending into primary and senior sections by using the Church itself. Several teachers were also supplied to Churches of other denominations.

I think these illustrations will serve to show how desperate is the need for Toc H to get down to study and work on, and for, these new estates, and how tremendous the opportunities are. We have the bones and no doubt much will be done and said to produce more bones, but will Toc H undertake the task of creating a soul

within the bones? It can be done—in fact, it is being done—but the great need is for Toc H to extend this work to wherever there exists a housing estate. The difficulties will be many, but the very nature of the job provides plenty of scope for adventure and initiative. I can only hope that these experiences, related here, will help to inspire you to go and peg out your bit of ground and get on with the building of the Kingdom.

In conclusion, a few practical hints as to how to start might be useful, and first I would say—send out at least three carefully selected men from the mother Branch or Group and let them first duplicate themselves with men actually living on the estate, then, together, as a small group, get down to study local conditions and produce a plan of campaign. This is absolutely essential if the job is to be tackled seriously, and if you are going really to accomplish things instead of just overlapping in the wrong places. The plan should be one which, in practice, will bring Toc H into personal contact with the residents, so that the spirit of friendliness can be developed. Don't go out for too big things at first. Get down to study, survey the ground, know the needs and then go out to fill those needs, keeping well in mind that the main purpose is to develop the personal friendship of the people and to bring them together in social life so that they may learn and enjoy the spirit of fellowship. Then, having won their confidence—having got them running their own shows which you have initiated—go out for bigger things in the form of a Community Centre.

One final word—if you cannot work on an estate you can still help—use every means in your power to focus public opinion on the need for a social centre in every new housing estate. Let Toc H make the public conscience recognise that this social centre is just as vital and urgent as the building of houses themselves. In this way it will be true to say that Toc H will turn “Housing” back to “Home Building” in its truest and finest sense.

PETER NEWMAN.

NOTE.—The importance is now recognized of trying to initiate and link up the various activities which are often conspicuous by their absence on a new housing estate—recreational, social, educational (in the wide sense) voluntary health services, and tenants' questions. A national organization, the NEW ESTATES COMMUNITY COMMITTEE, has fostered developments of this sort during the last five years in London, Birmingham, Manchester and elsewhere. A number of “Community Associations” are in existence and the Committee would be glad to place the experience which they have gained at the disposal of any group of people interested in developments on new housing estates. Enquiries will be welcomed by the Committee, c/o The National Council of Social Service, 26, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

## AN ANCIENT HOUSING REFORMER

*From the Code of Laws of Hammurabi, King of Babylon, circa 2085 B.C.*

If a builder has built a house for a man and his work is not strong, and if the house he has built falls and kills the householder, that builder shall be slain.

If the child of the householder be killed, the child of the builder shall be slain.

If the slave of the householder be killed, he shall give slave for slave to the householder.

If goods have been destroyed, he shall replace all that has been destroyed; and because the house that he built was not made strong, and it has fallen in, he shall restore the fallen house out of his own material.

## “A Feeling Sense of all Conditions”

**R**ESULTS of a survey of 15 large cities with a total population of 11,511,275, made by the *Architects' Journal* (issue of October 26, 1933) and reprinted with its permission.

517,221 live at over three per room.

2,977,565 live at over one and a half per room (over two in Scottish cities).

669,750 rooms are required merely to abate overcrowding at over one and a half per room (over two in Scottish cities).

530,000 houses are required in order to abate overcrowding at over one and a half per room in the English cities and two per room in the Scottish cities and to replace all unfit houses.

578,000 houses are required to abate overcrowding at over one and a half per room and to replace all insanitary houses in all the cities dealt with in the enquiry.

Assuming that housing conditions in the other parts of the country (ranging from cities of about 250,000 to the smallest rural areas) are half as bad as in the cities investigated, which seems justifiable so far as can be judged, the total

HOUSING NEEDS OF BRITAIN AMOUNT TO 1,400,000 HOUSES.

NOTE FOR TOC H.—To feel what these figures mean in human terms picture a family of, say, six (father, mother, grown-up son, grown-up daughter, two children). If they have four rooms (including all living rooms) they are not overcrowded on this standard. To be overcrowded (over one and a half per room) they would need to have only 3 rooms. To be overcrowded (over three to a room) they would need to have only one room. And then consider that in London alone there are 1,196 families living six or more in one room.

## “The Human Touch”

“THERE’S lots of room, of course, for slum area treatment by Borough Councils, and they do lots of good, but by themselves they’ll never scotch the evil. You want the human touch; you want a sense of humour, and faith; and that’s a matter for private effort in every town where there are slums.”

—JOHN GALSWORTHY in *Swan Song*.

# WHAT CAN TOC H DO?

## A Suggested Plan of Study

**PRELIMINARY STAGE.**—Every member should read carefully the various articles in this number, which are designed to give a birdseye view of the range and complexity of the problem. These should provide enough information to ensure intelligent listening and discussion.

**STAGE 1.**—A Guest-night with an expert speaker, who should be asked to discuss the question on broad lines, and not to limit himself to one method of attack. It is important that members should be ready to ask questions for which their previous reading will have armed them, as housing is a matter where great enlightenment can be gained by “bringing the expert to the Group, hearing him and asking him questions.” It may well be found that such an evening will provide plenty of material for further discussion between members themselves at a subsequent family night. This should not be too long after the Guest-night: memories are short. If the Guest-night is arranged by a District, the subsequent family discussion would presumably be in individual units.

**STAGE 2.**—The above should ensure that all members have got clear in their minds the main outlines of the housing question. Now comes the time for detailed new study, which it is suggested should be carried out by a team or teams of the District or unit, according to local conditions. One team should certainly concern themselves with local conditions: ascertaining what is the shortage of houses; what slums urgently need to be dealt with; what proposals the local authority is making; and what maximum rent the unskilled workers in the locality pay. Other teams should acquaint themselves with the operations of the local voluntary housing societies (if any) with the action being taken by other bodies such as Rotary, with the special needs of the locality (*e.g.*, in rural districts), with the extent of overcrowding, and (where new housing estates have been built) with the conditions, economic and social upon them. In all these matters, Toc H, if it is truly representative of all types in the community, and is being brought by its jobs into personal contact with young and old, has an unrivalled opportunity of seeing the problem at first hand, in its human and material aspects. In some cases, teams may embark on a study of such difficult and controversial questions as the effect of subsidies, the relative advantages of State and private enterprise and differential renting. These are questions which men usually discuss with heat. Toc H should be able to bring them into a family atmosphere, so long as it is realised that unanimity is not to be expected. In Toc H men must learn to differ, and remain friends.

**STAGE 3.**—The teams, especially those studying the local situation, should report to the District or unit what they have found, and that as a whole will then be in a position to judge how it can best act to further the Patron's appeal. The first article on housing in this JOURNAL suggests several lines along which Toc H should be able to give useful help, but what can be done in a given place must depend on the local conditions, which can only be judged fully in the light of local knowledge. In housing, long views must be taken. Little can be done in one year, something in five, much in ten.

## Brass Tacks

*Here, a Toc H member, who has given much time and thought to the housing question and to the planning of practicable ways of action, states a personal view, which should reinforce what is said elsewhere in this JOURNAL as to the complexity of the issues involved and the necessity that all action should be based on careful study.*

IT would be difficult to suggest any other subject which equals Housing as a subject for effective propaganda. It is delightfully easy to show that the slums are responsible for endless disease and immorality and crime, to prove incontestably (by figures) that their complete abolition within a decade or so is a task well within the power of the nation, and to pour scorn not only upon the people who created such conditions but also upon those, including ourselves, who have tolerated them for so long. Unfortunately, or fortunately, this is not the right kind of propaganda for our purpose. If we are to do something really useful we must somehow show not merely that things are wrong but also, what is more important, how the individual can help to put them right.

The failure to solve the housing problem is not so much due to the indifference of the people concerned as it is to the difficulty of the problem. Public opinion generally is on this matter sound, and in many parts of the country there are men and women, some of them influential, who have long been deeply ashamed of the existence of the slums. Such men and women are probably to be found in every one of our cities. They have for years been ready and anxious to help, not only with money but in other ways also, in any enterprise which had for its object the provision of healthy homes for people who could not afford economic rents. If little has been done it is because the channels do not as yet exist through which people can make their personal contributions towards a solution of the problem. In these circumstances it behoves the propagandist to proceed with caution. To tell a teetotaller that he ought to give up drink is more than a mistake.

The fundamental difficulty which stands in the way of the solution of the housing problem is, of course, economic. The great need is for houses to let at rents which the poorest can pay. In Great Britain there are probably at least a million families who cannot pay a rent which will give the landlord a reasonably safe return of even one per cent on his capital. To provide for these families subsidies are essential. There are probably at least a million other families, urgently in need of houses, who can afford to pay rents that will give landlords a return of about three per cent, but no more. In cases of either class the private landlord is for practical purposes excluded. As the law stands he does not qualify for any subsidy, and he will not build and manage houses for a return less than that which he can get from a Government security.

The landlords of the poorer families must therefore be either the Local Authorities or what are known as Public Utility Societies. The only way in which citizens can influence their Local Authority is by political action. *Toc H would do nothing but harm to the causes of Housing and of Toc H if it were to become associated with any propaganda which involved criticism of the Government of the day, national or local.* We shall accomplish nothing unless we can retain the



confidence of those who direct housing policy, and, incidentally, control subsidies, without which we can make but a poor contribution. The field is large enough for everybody and we can, and should, devote ourselves to supplementing the work of the Local Authorities in their efforts to provide houses.

Here we must have recourse to the Public Utility Society, which does enable everyone to do something. All he need do is to invest money in the Society at a low rate of interest. The influence of Societies of this kind is as yet small, but it is growing and, with wise direction backed by effective but not offensive propaganda, they may before long exercise a powerful influence for good in connection with the housing of the poor. In places where there is a well-managed Society at work it is the plain duty of Toc H to help that Society. A well-managed Society is not likely to refuse competent and responsible assistance. Where no such Society exists the greatest contribution which Toc H can make is to get one formed. This is not a task to be lightly undertaken and no unit should be in any way disappointed if it finds the task too great. To succeed you must have the right personnel, and there are many units of Toc H which could successfully undertake tasks in some respects more difficult but which would be ill-advised to attempt this one.

No unit can hope to succeed if it relies solely on its own resources. The Toc H contribution may be to provide a nucleus for a Committee charged with the formation of a Society. For the reason already mentioned the Committee must be led by men who have the confidence of the various political parties, and it must include among its members at least several who have influence in the community, some of them business men of standing. At the same time there can be no room for passengers, and no one should be brought in who is not able to pull his weight however great his weight may be. The Committee must also have the services of at least one competent lawyer; his services will be almost indispensable if the Society is to start with a sound constitution, and housing legislation is not adequately dealt with in *Everyman's Own Lawyer*. He need not be on the Committee itself; that should be kept small. The services of men who know the value of property and the problems of ownership and management are also indispensable. Practical builders, provided they are disinterested *beyond suspicion*, are useful men. So are architects who do not expect to be allowed to prepare the plans themselves; in this vital matter a Committee must be free to pick and choose. An accountant can be of the greatest use, and somehow a secretary must be found who knows enough about the law to keep within it. Toc H may provide some of these men—there must be women too, for in many respects they know more about housing than men do, and there the L.W.H. might help. Unless a unit is in a position to provide from its own ranks, or obtain elsewhere, a number of men of the types mentioned, it cannot hope to promote a successful Public Utility Society, and this is a matter in which risks must not be taken. If we are to afford to people generally an opportunity to make their own personal contributions to the solution of the housing problem we must expect to receive money for investment from people who cannot afford to lose it. Money entrusted to us, or to Societies for which we are responsible, must be safe. Many Public Utility Societies have failed already.

Any unit which has not the kind of man-power indicated can do something by studying the local situation. Not only should housing conditions and needs be studied; discreet enquiries should be made as to whether anyone in the community has tried to do anything about Housing, or shown any interest in it, and, if any attempt has been made, why it failed. Enquiries of this kind may be fruitful beyond imagination, and not least because of the disillusionment and warnings that they often bring. Until the situation is rightly understood, anything in the nature of propaganda with a local touch should be avoided, though it may do no harm to let it be known what fine things are being done elsewhere.

One quite general rule may be laid down for all units whatever their strength or capabilities; the less said about the past the better.

G. L. H.

### Points for Beginners

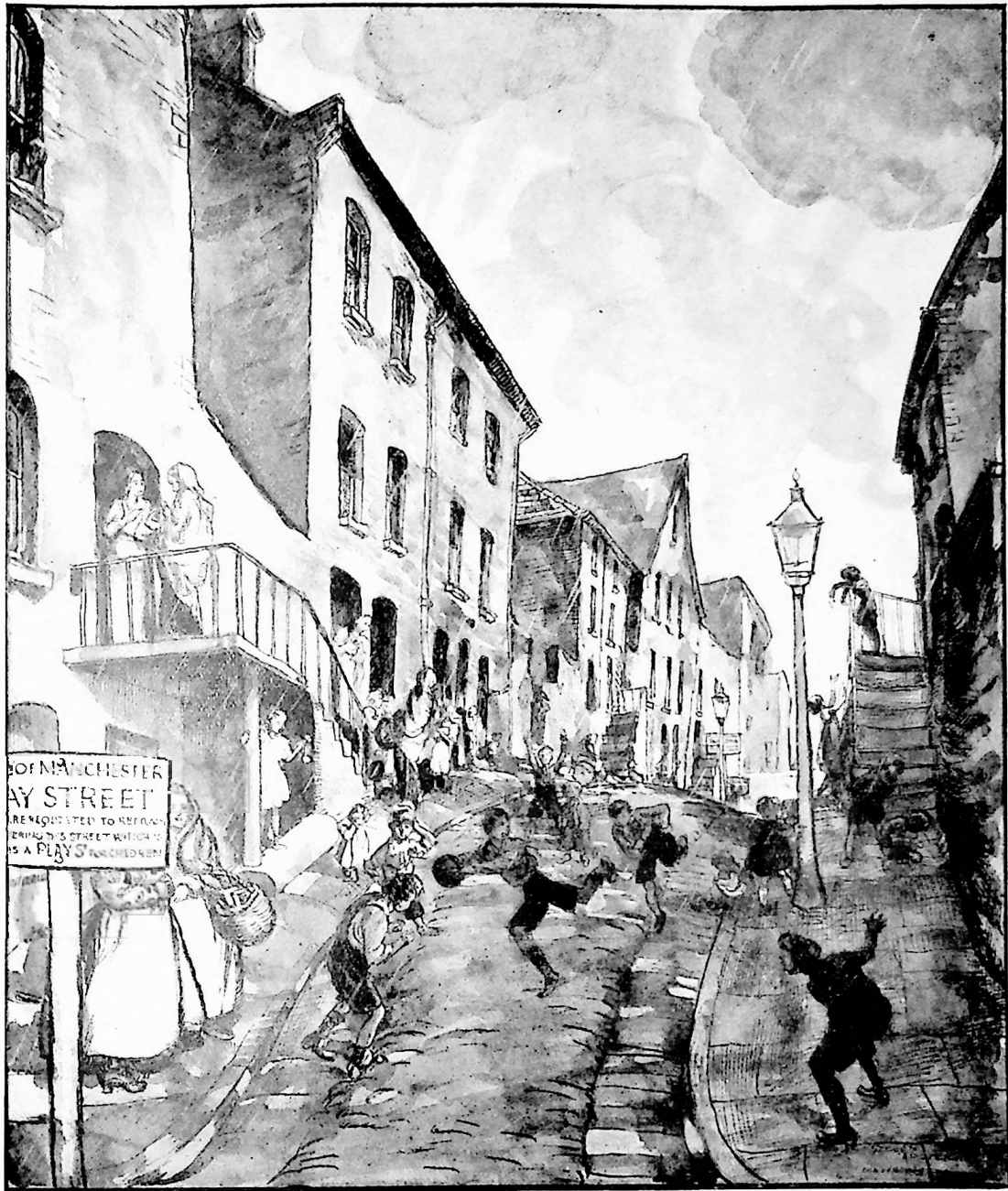
*Here are some personal views from a memorandum on the question of the Housing Problem in relation to Toc H by a member who is in Municipal Service. The full text of the memorandum can be obtained, in roneo form, by Secretaries from Headquarters.*

**T**HIS one problem of Slum Clearance has many facets. The Government view does not coincide with that of the Municipal Authority, and the average private body, not being restricted in opinion by Acts of Parliament, has an entirely different outlook. The Government deals in millions of houses, persons and pounds, and, I must point out, has to consider this problem in its relation to many others, always having regard to the political outlook. This latter being a varying factor, the Government attitude necessarily varies also; further, when it is remembered that the demolition of houses means "confiscation" or purchase at an abnormal price it will be seen that the question is not an easy one for any Government.

The question of influencing Government policy is one to be approached delicately by amateurs, and probably the best way of forming an active national opinion is to commence in a small way by work in an area of a City or a County Council.

Each Local Authority has prepared a programme. Can Toc H do anything in this connection? If a programme is inadequate, it is probably better to focus all activities on the carrying out of the existing programme than to arouse antagonism and distrust by endeavouring to secure a more ambitious programme with possible doubt as to its ultimate execution. The executive officers in any town should be able to keep in touch with the Council's activities. By judicious propaganda and shrewd questioning of local Councillors much can be done to prevent obstruction by misguided persons who are inherently anti-social, and who resent every change in established order and practice. There is no need to do more than mention here that opposition is always forthcoming from those who are financially interested, and remember that a basic doctrine of vested interests is contained in the old legal formula "Property is sacred."

Local authorities may perform much, but they are severely restricted by a very inelastic statute law. When good intentions are defined by Acts of Parliament, it will nearly always be found that someone suffers, and Parliament, in introducing safeguards, often frames them in such fashion as to stultify the original provision. So it is with the Housing Act of 1930, known in some quarters as the "Slum



A PLAY STREET FOR CHILDREN.

The notice on the board on the left of the picture reads :—

*Drivers are requested to refrain from entering this street which is reserved as a Play Street for children.*

*(Reproduced from the picture of Steven Spurrier by permission of the " Illustrated London News ").*



REMAINS OF FORMER SLUM HOMES.



A ONE-ROOM SLUM HOME AT REDBANK.

(Reproduced from the pictures of Steven Spurrier, by permission of the "Illustrated London News").

Clearance" Act. By means of appeals, objections, etc., made in proper protection of the financial interests of their clients, lawyers and estate agents can slow down the clearance process materially, and can thereby upset the rather delicate balance between dishousing and rehousing. This may result in new houses standing idle for a considerable period, just when houses are most needed.

Another aspect of the problem, which bristles with difficulties, is that of compensation for land, the site of demolished unfit houses, purchased compulsorily for rehousing. The existing provisions are said to be unjust, harsh and unconscionable by some, but others are of the opinion that the present law is equitable, giving to the owner of slum property all financial recompense to which he is entitled.

It cannot be stressed too heavily that Local Authorities are essentially conservative and as "professionals" they resent interference by "amateurs," however well intentioned. Councillors are, as a class, deeply interested in their duties, voluntarily assumed, and the great majority do work of very real value. In this work they receive much gratuitous advice, the greater part of it from persons and organisations not fully informed, and therefore without much real value. This is bound to inculcate a feeling of distrust, which, although hidden under a veneer of good manners, will be evident when anything but the most tactful approach is made. The officials of a Local Authority are qualified professional men who have devoted their whole time to this work. Their time is fully occupied and they, in most cases, have a very adequate knowledge of the problem in all its aspects. They will, however, in almost all cases, give freely of information, and will, if properly approached, indicate how best Toc H can help the needs of any one locality.

Many tenants become discouraged upon being offered houses on the outskirts of a city. They cannot take the long view. They do not realise that even though the parents may have a gruelling five years in prospect, the children will benefit to such an extent that the benefit to the community and ultimately to the individual outweighs any temporary hardship which may have to be borne for the next few years. Toc H can really help here. Contacts should be made with children in the slums by means of visits, clubs, classes, Sunday Schools, and so on, and maintained, probably by a different Group or Branch or transfer. Through the children the parents can be reached. If they look on our members in a friendly spirit, *everything* can be done. In the new schools, children from the slums will mix with the children of parents who are financially better off than their own. The inevitable class distinction can be broken down by careful organisation in the way of gymnasias and games. Scout troops can be formed, and even if the work of assimilation during the year is not successful, life in camp will accomplish wonders. The parents can also be helped to at least as great an extent as can the children.

Those tenants who have not succumbed to their surroundings still retain some sense of pride, and Toc H should endeavour to foster this as a first step towards an improvement in life. Left to their own resources, the tenants almost invariably make an effort by taking out a "club" with disastrous effects upon the family budget later. Shrewd and worldly-wise advice in this direction is needed, and the time to discuss this matter is very shortly after the publication of the Clearance Order, so that provisions may be made in advance.



## SOME GUIDES TO BRAVE BUILDING

**H**OUSING, once you set out to explore it in thought and imagination, is like an old city of haphazard growth. To find one's way through and to get a clear mental picture of its lay-out is far from easy. Subsidy Street and Capital Cost Road will get mixed up together. Slum Alley is long enough, but the narrow arch leading to it is easily missed. Health Square, pleasant spot though it is, is difficult to find, because the way to it is up and down and round many corners, through Statistics Gate, up Conscience Hill, round by Overcrowding Market, and then through Personal Determination Street, which leads direct to the new thoroughfare, now being widened, called Public Opinion.

Guides will clearly be useful and Toc H is fortunate in having the following excellent ones ready and willing to help.

*The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association*, 3, Gray's Inn Place, Gray's Inn, London, W.C.2.

*The Housing Centre*, Building Centre Cottages, Bush House, Strand, W.C.2.  
(Open daily, 2-5; Saturdays, 10-12).

*The Under-Forty Club*, with an office at the Housing Centre.

All these are willing to help with advice as to books, information about local Housing Societies, wise guidance as to any scheme of work, and to supply speakers both in London and elsewhere.

*The National Housing and Town Planning Council*, 41, Russell Square, W.C.1, also issues valuable papers on housing policy. It keeps abreast of all developments, national and technical, and is able to supply speakers on such subjects.

A word or two as to the use of these guides is called for, and will not be taken amiss.

(1) They should not be used as a substitute for the use of published information (*see page 81*) and to get knowledge which can with a little trouble be obtained locally. Their wide knowledge will be all the more valuable if those who seek it ask with minds already partly informed.

(2) The demand on their speakers is very great. They should not be asked to go and speak to small units; but rather to carefully organised guest-nights of many Toc H members from several units or a District, with guests brought in that they, too, may be interested. For smaller numbers local speakers can often be obtained. It need scarcely be remarked that where speakers are asked to come from a distance, expenses and, if required, hospitality should in courtesy be offered.

(3) The Under-Forty Club have a housing film lasting about an hour, which is excellent for rousing general interest. This, too, is in heavy demand and should only be asked for for an adequate audience. It must be worked by an expert, and the cost of hire is only intended to cover expenses. Details from the Secretary as above. Where the film is asked for it should be with the definite intention of following up the introduction it gives with closer study.

(4) London members who can manage it should certainly visit the Housing Centre, where books, papers, photographs, charts and general information can be studied. The Centre needs individual help to spread its activities and increase its usefulness. Those who have time to spare will find, as the Secretary says, that "almost any talent—business, scholastic, technical, artistic—can be used to help on its work."



# SOME AIDS TO FAIR THINKING

## Books

*"Slum,"* by Howard Marshall. Heinemann, 3/6.

A descriptive account of the writer's visits to different parts of the country. Gives the story of life in the slums without hysteria or sentimentality. It is not over-burdened with facts and figures and ends with a constructive chapter, propounding a logical plan of attack on a wide scale. A very useful general introduction to the whole subject.

*The Anti-Slum Campaign,* by Sir E. D. Simon. Longmans, 2/6.

The author, an ex-Lord Mayor of Manchester, is a recognized authority on the housing question. The book is clear and readable, and has an excellent description of national housing efforts since the war. It analyses the present extent of the problem and proposes a solution. Not everyone will agree with Sir E. Simon's estimates of the housing required, but the book is most valuable and informative. In the appendices are useful statements on subsidies and differential renting.

*The Slum Problem,* by B. S. Townroe. Longmans, 6/-.

A larger work, by a well known authority, known for his sound judgment and experience. The first part is historical, and later chapters throw light on such difficult aspects of the problem as slum-making, compensation, reconditioning and town-planning.

*A Citizen's Guide to the Housing Problem.* Edited by K. M. England. Chatto & Windus, 2/6.

A very useful little introductory book, attractively got up and illustrated, with short chapters on different aspects of the problems involved, not forgetting the importance of the human side. Well known authorities contribute from their special experience. Excellent for getting a birdseye view, and as pointing the way to further reading.

*The Heart of South London,* by the Bishop of Winchester. Longmans, 3/6.

This book, written while the author was Bishop of Southwark, deals with conditions in crowded South London. It is based on wide and detailed experience, and has the great merit that it sets the housing problem in proper perspective, by showing it in relation to the whole life of the people, especially of the growing generation.

(The above can be obtained through the Registrar, Toc H Headquarters).

## Papers

*The Architects' Journal.* Architectural Press, 9, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1.

This journal has carried out a survey of conditions in 15 large cities. The results for each city are given in the numbers stated below, while the number of October 16, 1933, contains not only the London survey but a summary of the entire results. The surveys are simply and interestingly presented and well illustrated. Toc H in the cities named should certainly possess them. A limited number of copies can be obtained from the publishers, price 6d. per copy (postage is kindly not charged to Toc H Secretaries applying as such). The numbers in question are those of June 22 (Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Glasgow); July 27 (Stoke-on-Trent); August 24 (Bristol); September 7 (Hull and Cardiff); September 21 (Newcastle-on-Tyne and Bradford); October 5 (Edinburgh and Dundee); and October 26 (London).

*The Housing Problem*, by Sir F. Fremantle, M.P. (Obtainable from Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, 3, Grays Inn Place, W.C.1). Post free 5d.

A useful historical sketch; the post-war Acts, Rent Restriction, and the work of voluntary associations. The writer is a supporter of the present policy of the Government.

*Planning No. 15.*

A broadsheet issued by P.E.P., a non-political organisation of experts concerned with national planning. Contains "No need for Slums," "Housing and the Building Industries," and "Some Key Statistics." Much information in short compass, but definitely advocating a National Housing Corporation. Two hundred copies have kindly been supplied to Headquarters and a single copy can be sent free to any Branch Secretary.

*The Challenge of the Slums*, by the Bishop of Winchester. S.P.C.K., 3d.

A plain and concise statement of the problem written to further the Archbishop's appeal.

*Slums* (Leaflet No. 9, 2d.), *The Present Housing Law* (Leaflet No. 11, 6d.), and *Nothing Gained by Overcrowding* (Leaflet No. 13, 2d.), published by the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, 3, Grays Inn Place, W.C.1, are all simple and useful. The last-named deals with the lay-out of new houses.

*Challenge* (The St. Pancras House Improvement Society, 96, Seymour Street, N.W.1). Post free 1/2½.

A delightful and beautifully illustrated account of the work of a pioneer voluntary housing society which has set a standard for many others, from its tiny start till to-day.

*The Church and the Slums—Aims and Problems* (Obtainable from the Church Union Housing Association, 238, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1).

Stresses the human side and suggests lines of action for groups of people of goodwill.

*The Housing Act, 1930* (H.M. Stationery Office). 1/-.

Some members may wish to study for themselves the Act under which slum clearance schemes are now proceeding.

*Report of the Departmental Committee on Housing* (H.M. Stationery Office). 1/3.

The Moyne Report, making recommendations among other things on Reconditioning, Re-housing and the function of Public Utility Societies.

## A LONDON HOUSING WEEK

**T**OC H HEADQUARTERS has received provisional notice of a proposed Housing Week, to be held in London from March 12 to 17. The plans include:—

*A Housing Service* on the morning of March 12.

*An Exhibition* of the work of the Public Utility Societies and other organisations interested in better housing at the Central Hall, Westminster, from March 12 to 17; during which talks will be given by experts.

*A Housing Demonstration* at the Albert Hall at 8 p.m. on March 12, at which it is anticipated that speeches will be made by leading public men.

Members in and near London should look out for further announcements in the public press. When plans are further advanced it may be possible to suggest ways in which Toc H members can help.

## THE OPEN HUSTINGS

DEAR EDITOR,

Toc H is in the habit of listening to the words of its Royal Patron. His call to neighbourliness at the great Albert Hall meeting and his appeal for the unemployed did not fall upon deaf ears. Now we are summoned to assist in the solution of the Housing problem. I feel that in dealing with so complicated a question we need to secure all possible co-operation with other bodies that are engaged upon this work in our several localities. As one who endeavours to double the not altogether incompatible parts of a Rotarian and Toc H-er, I naturally think of Rotary, which is pledged to this work and would be glad of Toc H help. The two movements are in many ways complementary, each of them able to do work that the other would find difficult, and in co-operation they would be capable of much. I do not feel that anything would be gained by my endeavouring to elaborate the ways in which they could work together, as local conditions vary so greatly; I merely wish to stress the desirability of healthy co-operation.

Colwyn Bay.

A. J. COSTAIN,

*ex-Chairman—No 5 Dist. R.I.B.I.*

DEAR EDITOR,

Toc H is preparing for a glorious drive against Slums and let us hope that we shall be successful in making the nation "Slum conscious" as soon as possible.

Let us also realise that some property is so insanitary and defective as to be simply crying for demolition, yet it is surprisingly difficult to define "a slum" in practice. Proposals for slum clearance will call for a great deal of "Thinking Fairly," and I propose to mention one of the biggest drawbacks to slum clearance. This is known as Section 46 of THE HOUSING ACT, 1925, whereby an owner of sound property is subjected to "daylight robbery" because his property happens to be situated in an area where there is insanitary property which is condemned to be demolished and the acquisi-

tion of the sound property is necessary for the better development of the whole site. If compensation were fairly assessed this would be satisfactory, but unfortunately the compensation payable is *less than the site value*. The injustice of this is felt by Local Authorities who have been known to hesitate to apply such a drastic and un-British principle. It should, therefore be the duty of Toc H members to study this aspect and to seek to persuade public opinion that this should be remedied and only the genuine slum creator penalised.

Another aspect of slum clearance is the wonderful possibilities of re-conditioning houses where this can be done rather than wholesale demolition and the erection of big blocks of five-storey flats. A family is often far more comfortable and healthy in a two-storey home than in perhaps one of the top-most storeys of a modern, model "dwelling." It is found that too many people move from the condemned houses to the fringe of the housing site where they create overcrowded conditions and a new slum. The dwellings are so often occupied by persons who are better off but who wish to take advantage of the subsidised low rents. In fact many authorities encourage this type of tenant because there are less arrears of rent. The real poverty-stricken man is the hardest to help, but of course if ten dwellings are erected in the place of one the extra accommodation available must eventually help this individual.

We must beware of the hardship created when we take away the income of a good landlord and when we take away the home or business of a tenant who is unwilling to move for excellent reasons.

I sincerely hope that we shall encourage sane and practical methods of ridding the country of slums and not be tempted in our enthusiasm to adopt methods which are comparatively easy but not just.

*Palmers Green.*

D. L. D. (P.A.S.I.).

## DREAD LEPROSY

A MEMORANDUM published in the January issue of the JOURNAL told of the practical steps taken to give effect to Tubby's Leprosy Appeal. This far-reaching and world-wide venture is now in the hands of a Special Committee of the B.E.L.R.A., of which Sir Samuel Wilson, who has recently retired from the post he held for eight years as Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, has, at Tubby's request, accepted the Chairmanship. B.E.L.R.A. is further represented on this Committee by Sir Francis Fremantle, M.P., and Dr. Robert Cochrane; Toc H is represented thereon by the three members whose names were given in the January number. The Committee is strengthened by others with expert knowledge of the field in the persons of Dr. J. Howard Cook, head of the Medical side of the Church Missionary Society and Dr. A. T. Stanton, Chief Medical Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Special Committee has had the inestimable advantage of the co-operation and advice of Dr. W. B. Johnson, Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, Nigeria, while he has been at home on leave.

It is intended to send out the *first* recruits sponsored by individuals who, moved by this Appeal, are in a financial position to maintain one recruit for his nine months' training and subsequent five years. Any large-hearted person desirous of knowing the extent of commitment for one recruit over a five-year period is invited to enquire from Sir Frank Carter, Hon. Treasurer of the B.E.L.R.A. (British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, 29, Dorset Square, London, N.W.1), who is *ex officio* Honorary Treasurer of the Special Committee and is prepared to reply to these enquiries. As already announced, one sponsor has come forward and as soon as a few more respond the first recruits will be selected and placed in training. The number of offers of personal service continues to increase—it is clear that openings will be found for the *first* recruits in Nigeria and later in other parts of Africa and India—and the immediate need, therefore, is for a few sponsors to start the train.

Below we are able to publish an article by DR. ROBERT COCHRANE, mentioned above as a member of the Special Committee, who is Medical Secretary of B.E.L.R.A. and Honorary Medical Adviser to the Mission to Lepers, besides being Honorary General Secretary-Treasurer of the International Leprosy Association. He is one of the outstanding experts on this disease, for his experience has been gained both while resident in the Leper Settlements of Purulia and Bankura, through extended visits to Leper Settlements in India, the Far East and Africa, and as a delegate to important conferences in Siam and the Philippines. In these ways it is probable that the number of lepers who have come under his observation runs to a figure of some hundred thousand.

Here is what he has to say about the new hope for the individual leper from the modern treatment and of the prospect of eliminating this centuries-old scourge from afflicted areas.

\* \* \* \*

LEPROSY—the very name conjures up in many minds thoughts of a repellent nature. The average person's ideas of the disease are based on descriptions in Holy Writ and on scanty information mostly dating back to the self-sacrifice of Father Damien. The word "leper" conveys the idea of ostracism, life imprisonment, someone who is to be feared and avoided. The words put by Shakespeare into the mouth of *Melancholy Jacques* can be aptly applied to such sufferers—"Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans *taste*, sans everything." Such a description can only refer to the advanced cases, but we are endeavouring to get away from the middle-ages point of view of the disease. In view of the splendid challenge of Toc H it may be well to try and describe briefly the nature of the disease and review the modern possibilities of such work.

Leprosy has its roots in the dim distant ages and it is probably the oldest disease known to mankind. Tradition has it that the cradle of leprosy is to be found in the upper reaches of the Nile, and Lucretius in his *de Rerum Natura* makes reference to the supposed birth of the disease:

“High up the Nile midst Egypt’s central plane  
Springs the dread leprosy and there alone.”

Until the work of Hollman and Dean, Heiser and others among American investigators, and Rogers and Muir among British workers, little desire was manifested on the part of workers to investigate thoroughly the disease, but on the establishing of more effective methods of treatment, a new impetus was given to the whole subject. One cannot enter into details concerning the modern treatment of the disease; readers must refer to the literature on this subject.

In its early stages, the disease is very mild; so much so that it may exist for years, possibly a lifetime, without drawing attention to itself. The disease is very similar to tuberculosis. In fact, the two germs are almost identical, and just as in tuberculosis there are all kinds of infection, from the latent lesion which is not discovered except at post-mortem and does not cause any signs of ill-health, to the rapidly killing galloping consumption. The difference, however, between leprosy and tuberculosis is that while tuberculosis usually kills when in the advanced stages, those suffering from leprosy seldom die of the disease. Leprosy is usually acquired in childhood or early adolescence, and in those who have become infected with the bacillus of leprosy it may pursue one of three courses: (a) the disease may advance and ultimately cripple the individual; (b) it may remain stationary and cause no further damage, and the individual suffer no disability whatever; (c) it may become naturally healed and nothing further may ever develop. This is not the place to enter into a description of the disease. Naturally, individuals belonging to groups (b) and (c) will not necessarily come under the eye of a doctor, nor do they present a problem to the health authorities.

With regard to treatment of leprosy, it can be quite definitely said that the early active case, providing he is put under good surroundings and treated intensively, has a very fair chance of becoming permanently healed. Once the organism has become disseminated throughout the deep tissues of the body, it is doubtful whether a person can become completely rid of his disease. Even when the disease has reached this stage, one has seen dramatic results and has the great pleasure of discharging such people in good health, but I fear these instances are the exception rather than the general rule. In a certain number of individuals the bacillus lives at the expense of the body, multiplying and yet not causing a great damage. This can be illustrated by the following case. While examining school children, a girl was found to be suffering from early signs of leprosy. The father of the child to all appearances was a healthy man, except for a little puffiness about his face, but because his daughter was an early case, he was examined thoroughly and to our astonishment we found that there was hardly a square inch of the man’s body in which we could not find large numbers of leprosy bacilli. Yet he was going about as a normal individual. Sooner or later, however, he might pass into the more acute stages of the disease, but at the time of his examination, his condition showed how comparatively harmless the bacillus can be.

These few words will indicate to the readers of the *Toc H JOURNAL* the magnitude and the complexity of the whole problem. While treatment has advanced enormously within the last ten years, very much more must be done besides treatment, and the need for the development of leprosy colonies along the right line is becoming more and more pressing.

I think we can say that as a result of the modern treatment of leprosy, large numbers of sufferers are completely healed, and of the others who are not restored it can be said that a great deal of their suffering can be relieved. As a result of the work of the past ten years, I think it can be definitely claimed that the whole disease now comes within the scope of preventive medicine, and given a system which deals with every aspect of the disease, it can be stated that leprosy can be controlled, and if controlled, ultimately eliminated. Those who volunteer for leprosy work and have the ideal before them of effectively contributing a substantial part in the fight against this age-long scourge are following no will-o'-the-wisp, but are putting their shoulders to a task which will cause generations yet unborn to bless their names.

## THE ELDER BRETHREN

Alexander McGrigor Robertson: Escombe Branch, Natal

News of the passing of "ROBBIE" on June 18, 1933, is unfortunately belated through the loss of the previous intimation in the post. "Robbie" was one of the very best and his passing at the age of forty has left a gap which it is hard to fill. He was a splendid Jobmaster, whilst in Branch work he was always willing to do his bit. Always wise in counsel, sincere in all he thought and did and helpful wherever he could assist.

Clifford N. Robson: Mill Hill Branch

"CLIFF" met with a motor-cycle accident on Christmas Eve and died in hospital on December 27 at the early age of 23. His cheery energy in giving a helping hand to the many activities in which he was interested will be remembered with gratitude by all who knew and worked with him. A Founder Member of the Mill Hill Branch, Cliff was Secretary two years ago, was on the District team committee, and one of the keenest members of the Branch Executive.

Dr. T. B. Wolstenholme, O.B.E.,: N.W. Area General Member

With the death of Dr. T. B. WOLSTENHOLME, O.B.E., which occurred on Wednesday, January 17, Manchester has lost one of its most popular doctors and Toc H one of its original members. The claims of his practice and of the Territorial Field Ambulance which he commanded, made it impossible for him to give much time to the life of the Branch, but he was always ready to help and his interest and sympathy were unstinted and were a great encouragement in the early struggles.

Edgar Nicholls: Whitstable Branch

EDGAR NICHOLLS ("Nick") joined our Elder Brethren on January 3, after a short illness caused by an accident on Christmas Eve. His passing causes a gap amongst our older members. He was Branch Chairman, and guided us through one of our difficult periods by his fair thinking. His passing was a great loss.

George Scott: Newport (Salop) Branch

Every member of the Branch will regret the loss of "SCOTTIE," who was killed in a motor accident at the age of 22. For some years he had been working with the Scouts. A kindly-natured boy, and always pleasant to meet, he will be a real loss to the Branch.



## MULTUM IN PARVO

✠ JOHN MALLET has had the misfortune to break a leg playing Rugger. He has been discharged from hospital and is now at home. We hope he will soon be back at work fit and well.

✠ Congratulations to PADRE ALAN COLTHURST, who is to be instituted and inducted to St. Swithin's, London Stone, near Cannon Street Station, on February 23, at 12.30.

✠ PADRE NORMAN KNOCK is being transferred from the South-Western to the Yorkshire Area and expects to reach Brotherton House, Leeds, about Easter.

✠ PADRE GERALD W. S. HARMER, Hon. Dist. Padre, West Cornwall, is joining the staff after Easter, and will go to the North-Western Area, living at Crewe.

✠ The REV. CYRIL PEARSON, one of the earliest members of Toc H in India, becomes Padre for India in succession to PADRE F. W. BAGGALLAY from November 14, 1934. Padre Baggallay will leave India at the end of April on his way home, *via* China, Japan and Canada. He is due at Vancouver on board the *Empress of Russia* by June 8, and in England by about July 10.

✠ GEOFF. MARTIN, now happily quite recovered, sailed for South Africa on January 26, on the *Ceramic* from Liverpool.

✠ S. J. DE LOTBINIERE (Mark VII, London) has become a member of the Central Executive, as well as those mentioned last month.

✠ THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE has noticed that in some at least of the controlling Committees of Toc H, the younger generation appears to be inadequately represented. They have, in filling five vacancies among themselves, co-opted men of the post-war generation. In future they will consider whether, as the result of the elections by District Committees to Area and Divisional Executives, the younger generation is adequately represented or not; and where they think it is not, they will give this matter special consideration in deciding whom they will nominate to those executives.

✠ Congratulations to AUCKLAND, New Zealand, promoted to Branch status.

✠ In future, all orders for *A Service of Light and Rededication* should be sent to W. Olphert, 29, St. Paul's Road, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

## POPERINGHE PILGRIMAGES 1934.

IN the last three years a great number of pilgrimages have been made to Talbot House, Poperinghe, displaying much variety in the size and composition of their parties and in the arrangement of their programmes. Experience indicates certain points on which most leaders and members of parties are agreed:—

(a) The most successful parties are those whose members are chosen and invited—not taken haphazard. A pilgrimage is not a mere "week-end abroad," but offers an unrivalled chance for intimate fellowship and real training to men, who, in various ways, may be called upon to help lead Toc H now or later.

The fact that a member who ought to go may not be able to afford the cost, should never be allowed to stand in his way. Most Areas and many units have already been able, quite privately, to help members thus situated to join their pilgrimages, and a small Guest Fund, accumulated in a box in the Old House by the thankofferings of members and other visitors, is administered by the Old House Committee for the purpose. Such help is in accordance with the family spirit of Toc H and those to whom it is offered should feel no difficulty in accepting it.

(b) The best size for a party is 25 to 30 members. There are 25 beds in Talbot House; extra beds can be had at Skindles and elsewhere in Poperinghe. But more than 25 to 30 cannot get the best out of the House at one time, or be conveniently conducted in the Salient.

(c) The ideal party has the right mixture of young and older members. It will usually be mainly post-war, but there should be enough ex-service membership to interpret the Old House and the changed battlefield. Neither element without the other can accomplish the whole aim of a pilgrimage to Pop.

(d) A party is wise to make a programme and stick to it as far as possible. There is a danger of trying to do too much (members arrive on Saturday in Poperinghe and have to go to work on Monday after nights on the boat—sometimes bad nights). There is also a danger of wasting valuable time by having no plan. In one case the pilgrims are too tired, in the other too bored, to get the best out of their visit; for this reason, a specimen programme, purely as a guide, can be supplied by the Pilgrimage Secretary.

(e) Parties should prepare for their visit. In any case, every Toc H member should have read *Tales of Talbot House* long before. The pilgrim should not fail to read *The Salient Facts*, by Padre Woolley and Tubby, and *The Old House—A Handbook for Pilgrims*; each: sixpence, from Headquarters, from All Hallows, or the Old House.

(f) Two mid-week pilgrimages have been allotted for Branch and Group Padres who are unable to share the experience of accompanying members of their local unit on a week-end pilgrimage. Padres wishing to go should write direct to the Administrative Padre at 47, Francis Street, London, S.W.1.

(g) In regard to Pilgrimage No. 24, this is open to all Areas and up to twenty couples can be taken. Vacancies will be allotted in order of application, so apply early.

#### Provisional Fixtures For 1934

1. April 1. Easter.	14. June 30—July 1. East Midlands.
2. " 7/8. London.	15. July 7/8. Midlands.
2A. " 9/12. Harrow School.	15A. " 11/12. Branch and Group Padres.
3. " 14/15. House of Commons Group and Hon. Commissioners Overseas.	16. " 14/15. Scotland.
4. " 21/22. L.W.H.	17. " 21/22. Yorkshire.
5. " 28/29. Southern.	18. " 28/29. North-Western.
6. May 5/6. Midlands.	19. Aug. 4/5. Bank Holiday. South Wales.
7. " 12/13. South-Western.	20. " 11/12. East Midlands.
8. " 19/20. Whitsun. North-Western.	21. " 18/19. L.W.H.
9. " 26/27. Eastern.	22. " 25/26. London.
10. June 2/3. South-Eastern.	23. Sept. 1/2. L.W.H.
11. " 9/10. Continental Conference.	24. " 8/9. Married Members and their Wives.
11A. " 13/14. Branch and Group Padres.	25. " 15/16. South-Eastern.
12. " 16/17. Northern.	26. " 22/23. London.
13. " 23/24. Western and South Wales.	27. " 29/30. Yorkshire.
	28. Oct. 6/7. L.W.H.

#### For Information and Necessary Action

1. ROUTES FROM LONDON: (a) *At any time*—Victoria (dep., Friday, 11 p.m.) via Folkestone to Dunkirk; thence by motor-bus to Poperinghe. Return from Poperinghe, Sunday, 10.30 p.m., arriving Victoria, Monday, 7.40 a.m.

(b) *Between June 15 and September 15 only*—Liverpool Street (dep., Friday, 8.30 p.m.) via Harwich to Zeebrugge; thence by motor-bus (2 hours) to Poperinghe. Return from Poperinghe, Sunday, 9 p.m., arriving Liverpool Street, Monday, 8 a.m. (NOTE.—In this case the 'Last Post' at the Menin Gate could be attended on Saturday but not Sunday).

2. **COST:** As far as can be ascertained, owing to the uncertainties of Exchange, the inclusive cost will be £3/3/0 per head by either route, London to London. Area Secretaries will confirm locally as to whether it will be more convenient and cheaper to join the boat by direct train to Harwich, and inform the Pilgrimage Secretary. The inclusive cost, Harwich to Harwich will be £1 5s. od. Special Rates for Pilgrimages other than at week-ends.

3. **NUMBERS:** Area Secretaries will inform the Pilgrimage Secretary as early as possible in advance of the number of members travelling and the number of berths required.

4. **PAYMENT:** Area Secretaries will forward the amount necessary to the Registrar at 47, Francis Street, S.W.1, at least three days prior to the Pilgrimage: the serial number of the Pilgrimage (see list above) should be clearly given in the covering letter. Cheques must be drawn in favour of 'Toc H Incorporated' and crossed 'Barclays Bank.'

5. **EXTRA STAY, etc.:** Members remaining in Poperinghe beyond the normal Pilgrimage period or wishing to stay in the Old House at other times should apply in advance to the Pilgrimage Secretary for cost and tickets. (The cost quoted above covers Friday to Monday).

6. **PASSPORTS:** No passports are needed for the week-end (between Friday and Tuesday evenings). Beyond that a passport is essential—apply to the Passport Office, 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, London, S.W.1; fee 15s.

7. **OVERSEAS MEMBERS,** who happen to be in England or on the Continent are cordially welcome to join any Pilgrimage on application to the Pilgrimage Secretary.

8. **PADRES,** Anglican or Free Church, will find Communion vessels, robes, vestments and other needs provided in the Upper Room.

9. **'UNOFFICIAL' PILGRIMAGES:** Talbot House is naturally open at all times for the visits of Toc H members—with such restrictions as the presence of regular Pilgrimage parties may demand. The Old House Committee deprecates independent parties, unprepared and unled.

10. **'MIXED' PILGRIMAGES:** The L.W.H. Central Council, on April 12, 1930, passed a resolution "that members of the L.W.H. shall not as a rule go on Toc H Pilgrimages and that the Toc H Central Council be asked to fix a date after which no such expeditions shall take place." The Toc H Central Council, on April 26, 1930, unanimously passed a resolution that "after September 30 (1930) members of the L.W.H. shall not go on Toc H Pilgrimages, unless, at the time a Pilgrimage is announced, the Central Executive have approved that members of the L.W.H. should be allowed to go on that particular Pilgrimage."

11. **LIBRARY BOOKS:** Some pilgrims have made it a practice to bring with them a book to present to the library of the Old House. The Old House Committee wish to welcome and encourage this habit, especially as regards books of post-war prose and poetry.

12. The Old House has now a complete heating installation. It is suggested therefore that Pilgrimages could be advantageously undertaken between September and March.

13. **INFORMATION:** All enquiries with regard to the Old House should be addressed to The Pilgrimage Secretary, 42, Trinity Square, E.C.3.

PAUL SLESSOR.

## BIBLE READING FOR TOC H

To those members of Toc H who are looking for some aid in regular reading of the Scriptures, it may be of interest to know of the *Daily Readings and Notes* issued monthly in either Series A—primarily for adults, or Series B—primarily for youth and also for those requiring simpler readings—price, post fee, 2½d. per month, or 2/6d. for the year. They can be ordered from the Secretary, Bible Reading Fellowship, Victoria House, 117, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1. A new series starts with January, 1934.

## THE SCHOOLS SECTION CONFERENCE

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the Schools Section of Toc H was held on January 8 at Mark I. Major General Sir Arnold Sillem (Chairman of the Schools Advisory Committee) took the chair as usual. Seven headmasters and the correspondents of twenty-five schools were present, and, in addition, representatives of the Boy Scouts' Association, of six Areas and other members of Toc H staff. A special Guest-night at Mark I followed, at which Dr. Methuen, of the Home Office, spoke on Borstal work.

### A Gulf for Bridging

After the report on the working of the Schools Section, during 1933, Hubert Secretan gave the chief talk of the Conference on the subject of "The Schools Work in relation to the needs of the time." He contrasted Victorian order and stability with the chaos of the present day. Everything, he said, had been questioned and there was no more faith in the old scheme of things. But there were signs of the beginnings of a constructive mood a feature of which was a belief in Christian principles as good politics, good social ethics and as limiting the sphere of economics. There was also, however, a great danger. Nowadays, the majority of working boys, having been educated so as to be able to think for themselves and to be worthy of responsibility, could find no chance of assuming any responsibility or for developing individual personality. Moreover, the Public School boy who, as frequently happened, took a 'lower grade' job alongside working boys, often had a different status in the office, were privileged as regards getting leave off work and in a number of small ways, and in some cases was apt to assume, though seldom intentionally, an attitude of superiority. Because of all this there was a growing bitterness which was driving a wedge into what should be a single forward movement of youth.

It was urgent that this gulf should be bridged. Already the idea of patronage no longer existed in the schoolboy's mind. But he was still very ignorant of conditions of life other than his own and his ignorance prevented him from thinking fairly. There was, indeed, little to dispel that ignorance. Managers of Boys' Clubs were always crying out for the help of Public School boys and the Schools Section did what it could, but only six schools out of approximately 100 had sent representatives to the Training Course in Club-work that had just been held. This failure was due to the fact that the subject was treated as an extra in the schools. It could not be dealt with by an occasional talk by a visitor. What was wanted was that the idea of training boys to understand their fellow men and to appreciate their outlook was recognised as the most important of school subjects, and as requiring opportunities for practical experience as well as for hearing lectures. That would necessitate a lot of time and trouble for the schools in thinking of, and carrying out, experiments; but it could be done if they realised the importance of it, and indeed it had got to be done soon, if at all.

In answer to various questions, Hubert Secretan suggested that learning about other conditions should be recognised as part of the training given by any good school. He wanted to see them studying such subjects as Housing and Unemployment and supplementing the study by going to see things for themselves.

Having heard the account of one such experiment on the part of Stowe School, senior members of which were running Scout Troops and other activities in villages round Buckingham, the Conference listened to a very valuable talk by G. Stainforth, of Merchant Taylors' School, about the work of the School Correspondent. Finally, Michael Coleman told them all about the North of England Schools and Clubs Camp, illustrating his remarks by showing the film of last year's camp.

## Miscellaneous Advertisements

**VISITING YPRES?** SHANNON HOTEL, opp. Menin Gate, Brit. Owner-Manager. Capt. Leo Knox, late ASC. English food, quiet. From 5/- per day. 10% dis. Toc H.

**PEACEFUL HOLIDAYS** amidst beautiful scenery at Mrs. Bowling's "Rosemount," Combemartin, N. Devon. From 2 gns., good food, 10 minutes sea, own grounds with sea view overlooking valley.

**TOC H PRINTED STATIONERY FOR GROUP OR BRANCH USE.** 100 sheets in two colours, 5/-; one colour, 4/-; also POSTER BLANKS in two colours, 15" x 10", 25 for 3/6; 20" x 30", 25 for 5/6; post free.—THE "STAR" PRESS, 583E, Commercial Road, London, E.C.1. Phone: East 3367-8.

**JUVENILE CONCERT PARTY**, professionally trained, will visit any Church or Toc H centre (in the interests of approved charities), within, say, 30 miles of London. Low fees, or, under certain conditions, free of charge. Apply: "STAR" PRESS CONCERT AGENCY, 583E, Commercial Road, London, E.C.1. Phone East 3367-8.

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We hold the widest range in London.

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Small Advert. Dept., Toc H Journal,

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"I did send  
for a cup  
of tee . . ."

More than 260 years ago the great diarist of the 17th century became an ardent devotee of "the Cup that Cheers."

To-day everyone has the opportunity of drinking the fragrant beverage that in Pepy's time only the richest could afford.

**THE MOST DELICIOUS AND ECONOMICAL  
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TEA**

**SOLD ONLY BY FAMILY GROCERS  
1/8 to 3/8 per lb.**

### THE BOOK OF LAST YEAR.

The outstanding publication of 1933 was  
undoubtedly

## THE YEARS BETWEEN

*The Story of TOC H, 1919-1922.*

In Paper Covers 1/-

Copies are still available.

ORDER FROM THE REGISTRAR.

## DESPATCHES OF THE MONTH

*Owing to the preponderance of the material on Housing in this number of the JOURNAL, much news both from overseas and from the home areas is being held over until next month; to those clients who have been thus refused admittance, the management apologises.*

### From India

It is probable that since the post war development of Toc H, many, varied and unique have been the conditions under which its members have gathered together in different parts of the world. But it is doubtful if the recent meeting at Balambat, a village in the Bajaur territory on the North West Frontier, during the military operations during the summer of 1933 have been equalled. The village itself is typical of many on the frontier—a sunbaked cluster of mud huts suggesting to the casual observer, by reason of its squat proportions, the appearance of a fortress. The villagers fully justified the descriptions given of them in the many picturesque tales of their exploits which have been published, but which, however, fail to describe their antipathy to soap and water, a habit which adds to their grim appearance. The Force concerned, numbering among its strength a few Toc H members, was cooped up in the usual perimeter camp with its surrounding protective picquets and restrictions. Many of the personnel were young soldiers seeing the much talked-of grim frontier for the first time, and keenly anticipating a skirmish with the Tribesmen. It is not clear who actually originated the idea of a Toc H meeting, but it grew up in the minds of the four members previously stationed at Abbottabad. A little enquiry work was set afoot which resulted in a couple of probationers of other Indian Groups being ferreted out. The next thing was to decide on the room for meeting. A glance round the camp revealed an isolated marquee which turned out to be the Operation Theatre of the Force Hospital. The responsible authority was approached and granted its loan for one hour on the evening specified. When the evening arrived two members turned up fully armed, looking very warlike. Assurance was given that there was no likelihood of a “Stand to” that evening, so thus satisfied they went away to return soon after looking more peaceful.

The meeting began with the Ceremony of Light. The number of members and probationers was seven, all of whom draped themselves on the operating table or packing cases wherever they could be found. It was obvious that up to the very instant before the meeting all the men there had been working, all were dressed in the recognised garb for the frontier—boots, puttees, shorts and open-necked shirt. Only one or two had seen service in the Great War. It had not been possible to draw up an agenda, so after the usual formalities there ensued informal talks, which led up to the real purpose of the meeting, “could Toc H probe out some job which required to be done.” It was felt that something should be thought out to relieve the monotony and cheer up the Troops cooped up for days on end within the limits of the camp. Many suggestions were put forward, but the decision ultimately reached was to organise a Basket Ball Tournament, one for the British and another for the Indian Troops. The Sappers who were present were confident that they could turn out something to take the form of trophies to be presented to the winners. When they materialised they naturally lacked beauty and material value, but they were accepted by the winning teams in a fine spirit of enthusiasm and jocularly. The British trophy was named the “Balambat Bowl,” and the Indian the “Timurgara Tankard.” Entries were overwhelming in numbers; in fact a wind of its success must have got about for a Deck Tennis Tournament for British officers was billed for the same day. The three tournaments were placed under one control, with a Toc H man at the centre. So great was the success of this day that another of aquatic sport on the Panjkora River provided the grand finale to a very enjoyable week, and all the result of an hour's meeting in an operating theatre in a frontier outpost.



## From South Africa

IN NOVEMBER, 1932, when the depression was at its worst, the Durban Units found their ideal corporate job, a Rest Room for any who might care to use it at any hour of the day or night. First one hundred, then two hundred, and now some five hundred penny cups of tea and sandwiches are served daily between early morning and late evening. Some of the users of the room are young fellows of fine character and splendid physique who, but for the hard times would be making good in their trades, others are men who cannot even pass the doctor for a job on relief work, and there are yet more whom through inactivity and hopelessness are now unemployable. Papers, games, magazines, and a piano, this last contributed by Rotary, are there for use, but the most popular evening seems to be the Sunday "At Home," free to all comers. It is a homely gathering, where a few old Hymns are sung, a padre or other speaker gives a ten minute talk, and local talent performs, while the ever successful tea fight breaks in halfway through the festivities. Besides benefitting others, this experiment is pulling the family in Durban together and is paving the way and providing experience for a yet more adventurous experiment for meeting spiritual needs, and for constructive thought on social and economic problems.

By the time that this is read, Geoff Martin will have started on his return trip to South Africa to re-join Owen Watkins. All the news from Owen so far has been from his own pen, so just to correct the balance, here are some reports of his activities from the *Compass*, which will show more clearly than he would admit what influence he is having on the life of Toc H in South Africa. In Rhodesia he was given a busy time, for on the morning of his arrival at Umtali he was booked to speak to the schools at 8.30 a.m. and to address the Branch in the evening, when he gave a stirring talk on Toc H as a youth movement. This he followed with a public appearance on the next evening, a garden party the next day, a sight seeing trip and a sermon to a crowded congregation on the day after that, which was a Sunday, and as a finishing effort, he spent the afternoon with the L.W.H. and the evening with the membership which had come from far and near.

The general results of his tour in the Transvaal are that not only have the units gained inspiration but as he has been brought into touch with the leading citizens and representatives of other organisations to explain the work and aims of Toc H, which has immediately produced a new and friendly attitude towards the Family, and this in return tones up the movement as it realises that in the public eye it stands for such high ideals. Owen has had record meetings with Padres, in which he was able to break down barriers of misunderstanding and produce from them the support that is so much needed. Schools also he tackled, with most success in Pretoria, and in Johannesburg he did fine work with the Old Boys from a number of leading South African schools by impressing them with their responsibility to the future.

One word *must* be said about the Armistice Service that the *Johannesburg* Branch arranged in the War Memorial Chapel in the Cathedral as in previous years. Owen led the Litany *On the Road Home*, and as he finished, from far away the organ pealed and a glorious voice sang in praise of those who have gone before. Then Owen told of the meaning of it all, of the men whom he had loved and had served with, of the spirit that made them great. Then came the first watchers of the night for the vigil, and, as once more Laurence Binyon's words echoed into the darkness from the west gallery the trumpeters of the Imperial Light Horse sounded the Last Post and the Reveille. All night long the Watchers came and went. In Owen's watch, fifty members of the S.O.E. arrived unheralded, and the Ceremony of Light was held especially while they read from their Roll of Honour. Towards morning thunder stirred in the air, and rain came with the breaking dawn, then the bright warm sun.

## Area Despatches of the Month

### From the Southern Area

IN reviewing our progress during the past year with a view to fresh resolutions for 1934, we first, in the words of an article in the January JOURNAL, "look on the face of our accounts and are ashamed." It is true that with 81.9 per cent. we are fairly high up on the list but we had set out in 1933 to try and achieve our full quotas and we have sadly failed. One District and the unattached units have succeeded in exceeding their allotment but most of the others have somewhat miserably fallen short. We are, however, nowise despairing and this year we are really going to the top of the pole. One unit last year was rescued from complete default by gallant builders. This year we are going to struggle to put all builders' contributions on the surplus side of our accounts.

Two units have died, and four new ones come into being while it looks as though there will be four new Rushlights lighted soon. The sub-district system initiated in North Hants and the Thames Valley looks promising and the district teams are all working manfully. *Newbury*, following the example of *Poole*, have successfully launched a big unemployment relief scheme and many units, particularly *Slough*, have done and are doing valuable work amongst the unemployed on the social side. The army at Aldershot have secured a hut for their boys' club, and a fine meeting of the Group was held at the Headquarters of the *Blackdown Wing* when Tubby and Sir Talbot Hobbs were the guests, and the Assistant Chaplain General gave a talk on the Four Points of the Compass. Apart from the satisfactory growth of Toc H in the army, it is gratifying to find a considerable increase in Air Force personnel and both Group and District offices are held by men of the Air Force. Both these services are continuously on the move and the missionary field of Toc H is thus admirably recruited. Now we face the challenge of our Patron over the "Slum" problem. Superficially the increase in housing in the post war years would seem to be a matter of congratulation; unfortunately this has hardly touched the slum problem as comparatively little has been done to provide homes within the wage capacity of the labourer. So far as the low wage earner is concerned if he abandons his overcrowded and insanitary habitations he can still find no place to go to where his rent is within the compass of his wage earning capacity. It is a tremendous problem but one which the conscience of the people will solve once it has been brought home to them. The challenge to Toc H is to arouse this conscience.

Since my last letter, Bill Evans and I had a week's campaign in Dorset, which we both very much enjoyed. This started with a training week-end for District and Unit officers at Wimborne; we also met *Wimborne*, *Spetisbury*, *West Moors* and *Swanage* and attended the District Birthday gathering. The difficulties of scattered country units were discussed at length and a forward movement planned by which each undertook to launch one new unit during the coming year. Since this "implosion," Wimborne put on a very fine production (judging by the Press accounts) of the "Light of the Lamp." In February, Bill and I have a week in Bournemouth. In the same month, Vic Martin has been lent to us for concentrated work in the *Oxford* Sub-District. He will partner Major R. Way, who has been appointed Hon. Visitor for the *Thames Valley* District and I shall be extremely surprised if their partnership does not produce a real forward movement and the establishment of Oxford as a District. The principal fixture already made is a big Guest Night at Oxford on February 13, when Squadron-Leader Gordon, R.A.F., will be the principal guest.

All the very best, individually and corporately for 1934.

R. C. G.

PLATE XI.



(Photo., Under-Forty Club).

WHY SHOULD THIS BE—



— OR THIS —



— WHEN THIS IS POSSIBLE? —

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